

Politeness: Applications in Translation Studies

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**I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis,
and that the work incorporated in it is entirely my own.**

To my husband Alex Khashab:
Once upon a time in Frankfurt . . .

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Abstract

The research on “politeness” as a socio-linguistic phenomenon can be utilized beyond linguistic boundaries to investigate translation solutions for “impolite” English and Arabic texts. Throughout this study, politeness is not used in its moral sense, but rather in the light of Brown and Levinson’s (1987) and Leech’s (1983) views as a series of face-saving strategies and maxims that can help the translator ensure the acceptance of the target reader. I focus on the translators’ strategic use of language to modify the politeness relations of the source language (SL) to meet the standards set by the target language (TL) culture. I research the presence of “politeness equivalence” between the SL and the TL, and explore how this can be achieved and assessed.

My choice of two controversial Arabic and English texts, the *Arabian Nights* and *Lady Chatterly’s Lover*, is meant to help reveal translational behaviour and show that politeness similarities and contrasts are deeply rooted in the ST and the TT cultures and languages. I monitor the transfer of politeness features and pinpoint the areas of “translation failure” that can lead to cross-cultural misunderstandings. The translators’ marked choices can have ideological embeddings, and meanings are often intentionally manipulated, either as a canonized approach to reconstruct the interplay of

dominant and dominated languages, or to redress the cultural threat posed by a sexual taboo.

I discuss the translators' tactics to resolve politeness problems, my goal being to explain that the major problem in translating politeness is more cultural-ideological than linguistic, and how this can affect the quality of translations. That is why I also investigate the errors made by a group of Syrian translation studies students in applying politeness norms to letter discourse in English, and show how this could affect cross-cultural communication. I also analyze Syrian modes of politeness to show its cultural specificity, assessing translation errors that result from translating from positive politeness-oriented and collectivistic culture into negative politeness-oriented and individualistic culture. By using politeness theory as a model for my study, I stress that the TT politeness reflects the TT cultural and linguistic system of values and beliefs rather than that of the ST. The translators' biases towards the TT and regulation of the ST language can jeopardize the accuracy and adequacy of translation.

Standard Abbreviations

CC	Conversational-Contract
CP	Cooperative Principle
D	Social Distance
FTA	Face-Threatening Act
H	Standard Arabic
L	Arabic Dialect
MP	Modal Person
P	Power
PP	Politeness Principle
R _χ	Rank of Imposition
SL	Source Language
ST	Source Text
TL	Target Language
TT	Target Text
W _χ	Weightiness of Imposition

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Introduction

Introduction

Politeness: A Theoretical Background

1. Definition

It has been widely acknowledged that politeness, as a linguistic phenomenon, has played a vital role in determining appropriate behaviour in society and maintaining social relations between its members. This social conduct is reflected in the language used by interactants in different situations, and is influenced by cultural codes. As politeness norms convey the universal desire of individuals to preserve the others' face wants, this study examines the universal connotations of politeness and its applicability to different cultural patterns. This comparative approach illuminates the universal aspect and investigates the assumption that people from different societies and linguistic systems tend to be stereotyped as more or less polite than others.

There is a need to set a framework that tests the theoretical and linguistic insights of politeness against real data. According to Lakoff (1975: 64-65), politeness is “a system of interpersonal relations designed to ease interaction by minimizing the potential for conflict and confrontation

inherent in all human interchange. Politeness can be considered one of the basic features of human communication as it reflects the tendency to show consideration towards the others.”

Since this study is concerned with politeness in the context of cross-cultural pragmatics, and since it involves English and Arabic texts, it will be necessary to find a theoretical basis which is sufficiently robust for both cross-cultural comparison and empirical testability. Thomas points out that although there has been a great deal of interest in politeness in pragmatics, the term is not only used in different ways, but also not defined (1995: 149).

Also, Watts, Ide and Ehlich observe:

“... one of the oldest things about politeness is that the term “politeness” itself is either not explicitly defined at all or else taken to be a consequence of rational social goals such as maximizing the benefit to self and other, minimizing the face-threatening nature of the social act, displaying adequate proficiency in the accepted standards of social etiquette, avoiding conflict, making sure that the social interaction runs smoothly, etc” (1992: 3).

The same difficulty is pointed out by Kasper, noting the different meanings of the term in ordinary parlance and pragmatics (1994: 3206). In the former,

“... ‘Politeness’ refers to proper social conduct and tactful considerations for others.”

In the latter, however,

“... ‘Since the object of pragmatic inquiry is linguistic action, ‘politeness’ as a pragmatic notion refers to ways in which linguistic action is carried out – more specifically, ways in which the relational function in linguistic action is expressed.”

The term 'politeness' is frequently confused with related folk terms like 'etiquette' and 'manners,' and it has folk meanings that are not clearly distinguishable from its more technical and formal meanings. The definition of 'polite' in *Collins COBUILD English Dictionary* is in line with the folk meaning, referring to good manners and social correctness:

"Someone who is polite has good manners and behaves in a way that is socially correct and considerate of other people's feelings" (1987: 1109).

These views of politeness coincide with what Watts et al. (1992) have termed 'first-order' politeness. In their scheme, they distinguish between the folk and pragmatic definitions of the term, the latter being "second-order" politeness. Second-order politeness is located within a theory of social behaviour and language use, and is not equated with any moral or psychological disposition towards being nice.

What is considered appropriate varies according to situation and culture, and includes personal values and tastes. I will discuss the socio-cultural implications of politeness, assess its relevance to translation studies, and examine the potential for achieving politeness equivalence between the source and target texts and cultures.

2. Principles and maxims

Fraser (1990) reviews four current approaches to politeness: the social-norm view; the conversational-maxim view; the face-saving view; and the conversational-contract view. These four approaches are used as a basis for reviewing theories of politeness.

I. The Social-norm View

According to Fraser, the first approach to politeness assumes that each society has a particular set of social norms; these more or less explicit rules prescribe a certain behaviour in each context (1990: 220). A positive evaluation (politeness) results when an action is congruent with the norm, a negative evaluation (impoliteness/rudeness) when an action is not.

The social-norm view includes etiquette (what to do and what not to do), and corresponds to ‘first-order politeness’ as suggested by Watts et al. (1992). According to them, first-order politeness corresponds to the ways in which polite behaviour is perceived and expressed by members of socio-cultural groups. It encompasses common sense notions of politeness (1992: 3). According to Fraser, “the social-norm approach has few adherents among current researchers” (1990: 221). Therefore, it is not appropriate to take the social-norm view as a theoretical basis for this study.

II. The Conversational-maxim View

This second view of politeness relies principally on the work of Grice (1975) and his Cooperative Principle (CP). Lakoff (1973) and Leech (1983) have adopted and elaborated Grice's CP. Grice's (1975) paper "Logic and conversation" gave rise to both the study of linguistic politeness within the framework of Anglo-American pragmatics and the ensuing attempt to develop second-order politeness concepts (Watts et al., 1992: 3). It aims at presenting and accounting for a subclass of 'non-conventional implicatures' (also known as 'conversational implicatures') as "essentially connected with certain general features of discourse" (Grice, 1975: 45). Grice embodied these features in what has become known as the Cooperative Principle. It is based on the following assumptions:

"Our talk exchanges . . . are characteristically, to some degree at least, cooperative efforts, and each participant recognizes in them, to some extent, a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction."

On the basis of the above, Grice labels the following as the Cooperative Principle (CP):

"Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged."

The CP entails four maxims, each of which entails sub-maxims. They are Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner (Grice, 1975: 45-46):

1. Quantity

- (1) Make your contribution as informative as required (for the purpose of the exchange).
- (2) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

2. Quality

- (1) Do not say what you believe to be false.
- (2) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

3. Relation

- (1) Be relevant.

4. Manner

- (1) Avoid obscurity of expression.
- (2) Avoid ambiguity.
- (3) Be brief (Avoid unnecessary prolixity).
- (4) Be orderly.

In discussing the CP and its maxims, Grice (1978: 113-114) says that:

“I have suggested a Cooperative Principle and some subordinate maxims, with regard to which I have suggested: (i) that they are standardly (though not invariably) observed by participants in a talk exchange; and (ii) that the assumptions required in order to maintain the supposition that they are being observed (or so far as is possible observed) either at the level of what is said – or failing that, at the level of what is implicated – are in systematic correspondence with nonconventional implicata of the conversational type.”

The CP and its associated maxims constituted part of a systematic philosophical theory of language which was predicated upon the assumption that the primary purpose of conversation is the maximally effective

exchange of information (Turner, 1997: 5). Brown and Levinson (1987: 5) also admit the importance of Grice's maxims, which

“... are not statements of regular patterns in behaviour; they are background presumptions, which by the virtue of that special status are robust to apparent counter-evidence.”

Lakoff (1973), adopting Grice's CP in an effort to account for politeness, suggests that Grice's maxims should be reformulated as pragmatic rules according to which utterances could be classified as well-formed or non-well-formed (Watts et al., 1992: 3). Lakoff (1973: 296) proposes two rules of Pragmatic Competence:

1. Be clear.
2. Be polite.

Lakoff (Ibid: 297-298) points out that “... when Clarity conflicts with Politeness, in most cases Politeness supersedes: it is considered more important in a conversation to avoid offense than to achieve clarity.” She (Ibid.: 298) lists the rules of politeness:

1. Don't impose.
2. Give options.
3. Make A feel good – to be friendly.

The first rule is associated with distance and formality. Lakoff states that “it can also be taken as meaning, ‘Remain aloof, don't intrude into other people's business’” (Ibid.: 298). The second rule sometimes operates with the first rule, in cases where the first rule would be inappropriate. Lakoff

(Ibid.: 299) explains that “certain particles may be used to give the addressee an option about how he is to react.” The intended effect of the third rule is “to make the addressee feel good: that is, it produces a sense of equality between S and H, and (providing S is actually equal or better than H) this makes H feel good” (Ibid.: 301). It accounts for the cases in which the speaker employs devices which will make the addressee feel wanted, or feel like a friend.

Lakoff’s rules have been criticized. Fraser (1990) points out that Lakoff does not explicitly say what she understands politeness to be, while Sifianou (1992: 22) states that Lakoff does not define the terms she uses so they are susceptible to misinterpretations.

Leech (1983), also elaborating the framework set out by Grice, formulates a Politeness Principle (PP) as a necessary complement to the CP. He (1983: 82) notes:

“... it could be argued, however, that the PP has a higher regulative role than this [CP]: to maintain the social equilibrium and the friendly relations which enable us to assume that our interlocutors are being cooperative in the first place.”

Leech’s framework consists of (1) Interpersonal Rhetoric and (2) Textual Rhetoric (Figure 1)

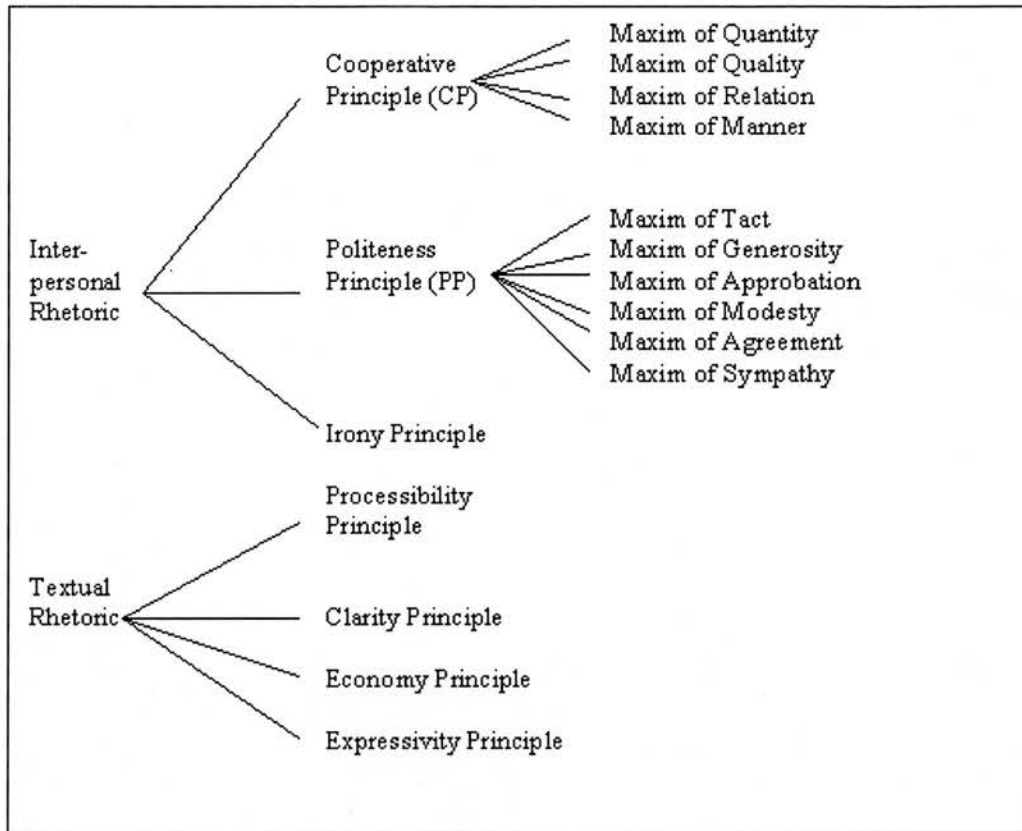


Figure 1. Leech's Maxims (Modified version of Leech, 1983: 16).

Leech (1983: 132) proposes six maxims of the politeness principle, which are stated as pairs:

- (1) Tact Maxim
 - (a) Minimize cost to other [(b) Maximize benefit to other].
- (2) Generosity Maxim
 - (a) Minimize benefit to self [(b) Maximize cost to self].
- (3) Approbation Maxim
 - (a) Minimize dispraise of other [(b) Maximize praise of other].

(4) Modesty Maxim

(a) Minimize praise of self [(b) Maximize dispraise of self].

(5) Agreement Maxim

(a) Minimize disagreement between self and other.

[(b) Maximize agreement between self and other].

(6) Sympathy Maxim

(a) Minimize antipathy between self and other.

[(b) Maximize sympathy between self and other].

Each of these maxims has a set of scales which must be consulted by the hearer to determine the degree of application of the maxim required in a speech situation (1983: 123). These scales are as follows:

- (1) The cost-benefit scale on which is estimated the cost or benefit of the proposed action A to S or to H
- (2) The optionality scale on which illocutions are ordered according to the amount of choice S allows to H
- (3) The indirectness scale, on which, from S's point of view, illocutions are ordered with respect to the length of the path (in terms of means-ends analysis) connecting the illocutionary act to its illocutionary goal

In addition, Leech (1983: 126) proposes two further scales that are highly relevant to politeness:

(4) The authority scale

(5) The social distance scale

The authority and social distance scales are roughly equivalent to 'power' and 'solidarity' (respectively) in Brown and Gilman's (1960) terms. Leech (1983: 127) summarizes the way these parameters influence tact as follows:

- (i) the greater the cost of *S* to *H*,
- (ii) the greater the horizontal social distance of *S* from *H*,
- (iii) the greater the authoritative status of *H* with respect to *S*,
- (iv) the greater will be the need for optionality, and correspondingly for indirectness, in the expression of an imposition, if *S* is to observe the Tact Maxim.

Leech (1983: 83) distinguishes between “absolute” and “relative” politeness. The former can be analyzed as a scale with a positive and a negative pole, in that some acts are inherently polite (offers) or impolite (orders). Relative politeness depends on the context and the situation.

III. The Face-saving View

The third approach to politeness is the face-saving view, of which the best treatment is that of Brown and Levinson (1978; 1987). In contrast to Leech, Brown and Levinson maintain that Grice’s CP has a different status from any so-called politeness principles. Brown and Levinson assert that linguistic politeness constitutes a message, a conversational implicature of the sort proposed by Grice (Fraser, 1990: 228). But, they propose a politeness model that also aims to account for the deviations from Grice’s Cooperative Principle. In other words, Grice’s CP provides a foundation for Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory, but Brown and Levinson add to Grice’s theory as they explain that the CP defines an “unmarked,” or socially

neutral, presumptive framework for communication. While the essential assumption is “no deviation from rational efficiency without a reason,” politeness principles are just principled reasons for deviation (1987).

Brown and Levinson (1987: 58) postulate a Model Person (MP), who is endowed with the properties of rationality and face, the latter being central to their theory of politeness.

“All our Model Person (MP) consists in is a willful fluent speaker of a natural language, further endowed with two special properties – rationality and face. By ‘rationality’ we mean something very specific – the availability to our MP of a precisely definable mode of reasoning from ends to the means that will achieve those ends. By ‘face’ we mean something quite specific again: our MP is endowed with two particular wants – roughly, the want to be unimpeded and the want to be approved of in certain respects.”

Brown and Levinson further define “rationality” as “the application of a specific mode of reasoning . . . which guarantees inferences from ends or goals to means that will satisfy those ends” (Ibid.: 64). Their notion of ‘face’ is derived from that of Goffman who defines face as “the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self, delineated in terms of approved social attributes. . .” (1967: 15-23). Goffman specifies two kinds of face-work: the ‘avoidance process’ (avoiding potentially face-threatening acts) and the ‘corrective process’ (performing a variety of redressive acts). Brown and Levinson define face as “the public self-image

that every member wants to claim for himself,” and state that “face is something that is emotionally invested and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction” (1987: 61).

Brown and Levinson (1987) propose two kinds of face: positive and negative. They maintain that the notion of face is universal, although they recognize that the content of face is culture-specific and subject to much cultural elaboration:

“Central to our model is a highly abstract notion of ‘face’ which consists of two specific kinds of desires: the desire to be unimpeded in one’s actions (negative face), and the desire (in some respects) to be approved of (positive face). This is the bare bones of a notion of face which (we argue) is universal, but which in any particular society we would expect to be the subject of much cultural elaboration” (1987: 13).

Brown and Levinson also assume that “the mutual knowledge of members’ public self-image or face, and the social necessity to orient oneself to it in interaction, are universal” (Ibid.: 62).

Brown and Levinson’s key concept regarding face is Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs): “Certain kinds of acts intrinsically threaten face, namely those acts that by their nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or of the speaker” (1987: 65). Thomas explains face-threatening acts as follows:

“An illocutionary act has the potential to damage the hearer’s positive face (by, for example, insulting H or expressing disapproval of something which H holds

dear), or H's negative face (an order, for example, will impinge upon H's freedom of action); or the illocutionary act may potentially damage the speaker's own positive face (if S has to admit to having botched a job, for example) or S's negative face (if S is cornered into making an offer of help" (1995: 169).

In order to either avoid or minimize such face-threatening activities, participants in interaction usually select from a set of strategies. Brown and Levinson posit possible strategies for FTAs:

1. Do the FTA off record.
2. Do the FTA on record.

The difference between on record and off record is whether the communicative intention is clear to participants (on record) or whether there is more than one unambiguously attributable intention so that the speaker cannot be held to have committed himself to one intent (off record) (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 68-69).

On record is subcategorized thus:

1. Without redressive action, baldly
2. With redressive action

Doing an act baldly, without redress, involves doing it in the most direct, unambiguous and concise way possible (for a request, saying "Do X!") (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 69). To speak on record without redressive action is to speak with strict Gricean rationality (Turner, 1996: 3). Bald on-record strategies are used in circumstances where:

“(a) S and H both tacitly agree that the relevance of face demands may be suspended in the interests of urgency or efficiency; (b) where the danger to H’s face is *very* small, as in offers, requests, suggestions that are clearly in H’s interest; and (c) where S is vastly superior in power to H” (1987: 69).

Redressive action “attempts to counteract the potential face damage of the FTA by doing it in such a way, or with such modifications or additions, that indicate clearly that no such face threat is intended or desired, and that S in general recognizes H’s face wants and himself wants them to be achieved” (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 69-70).

Redressive action is subcategorized thus:

1. Positive politeness
2. Negative politeness

Positive politeness is “oriented toward the positive face of H, the positive self-image that he claims for himself.” Negative politeness, on the other hand, is “oriented mainly toward partially satisfying (redressing) H’s negative face, his basic want to maintain claims of territory and self-determination.” Positive politeness is “approach-based,” whereas negative politeness is “avoidance-based” (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 70).

Brown and Levinson’s fourth strategy is ‘off-record,’ by which they mean that a communicative act is done “in such a way that it is not possible to attribute only one clear communicative intention to the act” (1987: 211).

Explaining how off-record strategies help S avoid the responsibility of doing an FTA, they (Ibid.) say:

“... the actor leaves himself an ‘out’ by providing himself with a number of defensible interpretations; he cannot be held to have committed himself to just one particular interpretation of his act”

Brown and Levinson’s fifth strategy is “Don’t do the FTA.” In this strategy, nothing is said because of the risk of great face loss.

Brown and Levinson (1987: 74) argue that in many cultures, the assessment of the seriousness of an FTA involves the following factors:

1. The social distance (D) of S and H (a symmetric relation)
2. The relative power (P) of S and H (an asymmetric relation)
3. The absolute ranking (R) of imposition in the particular culture

They note that “all three dimensions P, D, and R contribute to the seriousness of an FTA, and thus to a determination of the level of politeness with which, other things being equal, an FTA will be communicated” (Ibid.: 76). In many cases D “is based on an assessment of the frequency of interaction and the kinds of material or non-material goods (including face) exchanged between S and H.” They define P as “the degree to which H can impose his own plans and his own self-evaluation (face)” (Ibid.: 77). According to them, the sources of P are: 1) material physical control (over the economic distribution and physical force); and 2) metaphysical control (over the actions of others, by virtue of metaphysical forces subscribed to by

those others” They (Ibid.: 17) also use the term ‘hierarchy’ to mean P. They further note that “‘P’ is a value attached not to individuals at all, but to roles or role-sets. Thus in the role-set manager/employee, or parent/child, asymmetrical power is built in” (Ibid.: 78). R is defined as “a culturally and situationally defined ranking of impositions by the degree to which they are considered to interfere with an agent’s wants of self-determination or of approval (his negative- and positive-face wants)” (Ibid.: 77).

I argue that culture-specificity of each variable may result in the culturally different perceptions of situations. I will use Brown and Levinson’s “face-saving view” to make cross-cultural comparisons between Arabic and English translations. It provides a comprehensive framework for explaining cultural similarities and differences in language use and politeness formulas. Brown and Levinson (1987: 244-245) list the apparatus with which to describe cross-cultural variations:

- (i) the general level of W_X in a culture, as determined by the sum of P, D, and R values
- (ii) the extent to which all acts are FTAs, and the particular kinds of acts that are FTAs in a culture
- (iii) the cultural composition of W_X : the varying values...attached to P, D, and R_X , and the different sources for their assessment
- (iv) different modes of assignment of members to the sets of persons whom an actor wants to pay positive face, and the extent to which those sets are extended
- (v) the nature and distribution of strategies over the most prominent relations in a particular society

With reference to these dimensions, Brown and Levinson (Ibid.: 245) note that they can distinguish between positive and negative-politeness cultures. According to them, British culture is characterized as a negative politeness culture. Individuals in a negative-politeness culture should show a greater preference for negative politeness and off-record strategies. I will test these dimensions in regard to Arabic culture as a positive-politeness culture whose members tend to use positive politeness strategies.

IV. The Conversational-contract View

The fourth approach to politeness is the conversational-contract view, which has been presented by Fraser (1975) and Fraser and Nolen (1981), and elaborated by Fraser (1990). Adopting Grice's (1975) notion of the Cooperative Principle in general, Fraser recognizes the importance of Goffman's notion of face, but differs from Brown and Levinson's face-saving view. He explains the conversational-contract view as follows:

“We can begin with the recognition that upon entering into a given conversation, each party brings an understanding of some initial set of rights and obligations that will determine, at least for the preliminary states, what the participants can expect from the other(s)” (1990: 322).

As Fraser suggests, rights and obligations may change over the course of time, and re-negotiation may be necessary.

In this section, I have reviewed four approaches to politeness: the social-norm view, the conversational-maxim view, the face-saving view and the conversational-contract view. The social-norm view is more an everyday view of etiquette, than a theory of politeness, and thus fails to provide a theoretical base. The conversational-maxim view, the face-saving view proposed in Brown and Levinson's theory, and Fraser's conversational-contract view all provide a formulation of politeness and a basis for cross-cultural comparison. Since this is an empirical study, dealing with cross-cultural pragmatics, these views will be taken as its theoretical basis.

3. Politeness constraints

This discussion of politeness will follow Lefevere's (1992) translation norms, constraints that determine the way translators manipulate source language texts (STs). On the basis of Lefevere's assumptions, I detect how politeness patterns transfer from the ST into the target text (TT), and show how the politeness concept can be applied to translation studies in general. But first, I would like to look at the work of Andre Lefevere (1992), who distinguishes five kinds of constraints that regulate the production of translated texts. These constraints limit the translators' freedom of choice. This helps ensure the TTs' acceptability in the target language and cultures

by ensuring its conformity to the dominant norms. Lefevere (1992) outlines these constraints as follows:

1. Patronage: “the powers (persons, institutions) that can further or hinder the reading, writing, and rewriting of literature” (p. 15)
2. Poetics: “an inventory of literary devices, genres, motifs, prototypical characters and situations, and symbols” plus “a concept of what the role of literature is, or should be, in the social system as a whole” (p. 26)
3. The universe of discourse: “the subject matter of the source text, the objects, customs and beliefs it describes (p. 87)

Translators may feel that some of these are unacceptable to the target readership and, hence, adapt or bowdlerize passages thought to be ‘offensive’ or the like.

4. The source and target languages themselves, and the differences between these (p. 99)
5. The translator’s ideology: values and attitudes, including his/her attitudes to the other constraints, e.g. whether he/she willingly accepts them or not (p. 410)

To find politeness ‘solutions’ for the TT, translators may adopt pragmatic strategies. These relate to the selection of the ST material, a selection that is governed, although not exclusively, by the constraints outlined above.

Making a 'polite' TT means that the ST will undergo syntactic and semantic changes, and most importantly, pragmatic changes that can affect its message. To facilitate a deeper understanding of the politeness decision-making process, I adopt a comparative approach dealing with: 1) translated texts in English and Arabic; 2) other topics related to differences in the ST and TT languages and cultures.

4. The Plan of the Thesis

In the first chapter, I investigate how the concept of politeness is dealt with by the Victorian translators of the *Arabian Nights*, specifically Edward Lane and Richard Burton. I consider how Victorian patrons had an impact on the choice of language and the subject matter. This reveals how Victorian translators operated within the ideological parameters of their age, best reflected in orientalism and their biases against the Eastern culture.

Lane's and Burton's translations reflect the dominant poetics of the Victorian age regarding the *Nights* as a symbol of an inferior and immoral culture. In order to conform to their society's standards and norms of literary politeness and propriety, Lane and Burton change the politeness relations of the ST to match the expectations of their target readership and culture. These pragmatic changes include drastic expurgation of sexual taboo through

heavy editing, re-ordering, rewriting, addition, or omission of information deemed essential for the comprehension of the ST. This shows how Victorian translators succumbed to cultural and ideological pressures to “filter” the obscene sexual references of the ST, by both the influence of readers and their own agreement with the norms.

When Burton challenges the norms, he does so to serve his own ideological agenda and set of values. This damages the TT. Burton does not produce a better translation of the *Nights* than Lane’s. Burton’s own ideology and expectations of the ST culture hinder his comprehension of the ST, although he avoids accountability by offering his translation for subscribers only. This leads us to consider issues like domestication and foreignization, or estrangement of the TT as a way to adapt the ST to the cultural and ideological ‘home’ systems. Motivated by a clash of values between the Eastern and Western systems, the translators’ changes on the politeness level make the TT more an adaptation than a translation. In a nutshell, this chapter explores the linguistic choices and politeness strategies that both translators undertook to impose politeness on the *Nights*.

In the second chapter, I discuss politeness in Hana Abboud’s translation of D. H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterly’s Lover*. I investigate 1) how ‘politeness equivalence’ has been achieved; 2) the politeness changes

between the ST and the TT; 3) the linguistic nature of these changes and 4) explain the translator's motives for performing them. I pay extra attention to how politeness equivalence works in Abboud's translation: how it is reconstructed in the TT, how it affects Abboud's process of decision-making, and the set of constraints accepted by the translator. I examine this reconstruction of the politeness equivalence by comparing the two contending politeness models as well as norms of the target and source texts and systems.

Politeness in Abboud's translation can be evaluated by applying Lefevere's 'universe of discourse' constraint to the customs and norms of Syrian society to which Abboud has to adhere and the problems that a literal translation creates when the translator is too TT- oriented. Here, the question of censorship (translation regulation) plays a role in deciding how far the translator can go in translating off-limits topics. There is also the issue of how state politics intervenes in the way texts are translated, the kind of literary censorship practised by the governmental agencies and educational establishments that set the standards. This is related to the poetics and ideology of the Syrian society, and depends on how the guardians of culture and society regulate, censor, or neutralize the foreign (in this case) obscene material.

Abboud's regulatory procedures are linguistic, sometimes changing the illocutionary force of the ST 'obscene' words by changing their register. Another textual means that affects the politeness relations in the TT is Abboud's changing of the presuppositions of the ST; this problem results from the divergence in the ST and TT cultural backgrounds. By making other textual changes, Abboud does not offer the TT readers the interpretive cues available to the original audience. This is one of Abboud's major flaws, making some passages in his translation seem clumsy and obscure.

This chapter provides examples from the translation and their counterparts in the ST to highlight Abboud's politeness solutions and the impact of these solutions on the TT and its adequacy as a translation. These examples show the factors that guide the translator's work, control his choices, and influence his success in achieving politeness equivalence. I employ politeness theories to show the pros and cons of his decisions and the textual means of achieving politeness equivalence, and how this equivalence can determine the quality of the TT.

In the third chapter, I report on a questionnaire done to test Syrian students' modes of politeness in letter discourse to prove that linguistic differences in politeness indicate cultural differences between British and Syrian society. The goal is to show how Lefevere's discursual constraints,

especially those of poetics and language, affect the written communication between two diverse languages and cultures, and test the degree to which culture imposes itself on the text.

The study shows the implications of the negative transfer of politeness items in letter discourse from the SL into the TL. I show the consequences of the SL politeness formula's interference with coherence, and the need for translation to focus on producing a TT that is functionally communicative for the receiver. This means that the form and genre of the TT must be guided by what is functionally suitable in the TT culture rather than the ST culture. What is functionally adequate is to be determined by the translator, whose role is to make sure that the cross-cultural transfer takes place satisfactorily. The ST must be translated so that it is coherent for the TT readers, given their circumstances and knowledge.

This study also focuses on generic constraints, and shows that letter politeness norms are best viewed in terms of their purpose and ability to communicate. Within the constraints of this literary genre, there is a norm which expects the cultural reference to be preserved. Genre conventions are cultural indices, exerting a strong influence over the way genres are encoded in texts. The study assesses Arab translation students' conformity to the ST generic and discoursal conventions and the appropriateness of the

conventions to convey politeness in the TL. I explain what implications politeness carries for translation studies and translation teaching in particular. I present the translation problems by analyzing samples of the students' letters written in the TT and explain how transfer of politeness markers sometimes leads to miscommunication and impoliteness.

The fourth chapter pinpoints the different values that the *dughri* and *musayra* politeness strategies occupy in Syrian society, specifically on the directness/indirectness scale of politeness. Although conventional indirectness remains the most polite strategy for Syrians, I reconsider the equation of indirectness with politeness and directness with impoliteness. Evidence suggests that there is a trend toward a higher level of directness than is acceptable in the English-speaking world. The specific proportions in the choices between more direct and less direct strategies are culturally specific.

Dughri does not have an equivalent in English. Due to the lack of pragmatic equivalence, the English speaker will often miss the point of *dughri* speech and deem it inappropriate. Also, the interpretation of *musayra*, with its pragmatic ambiguity, will have a different force for English speakers, who might consider it as dishonesty and hypocrisy. Such differences in the politeness scale of directness/indirectness form a part of a

culture's ways of speaking (Hymes, 1974: 33) and contribute to its cultural ethos. Members of each culture have shared expectations in regard to the appropriateness of linguistic behaviour in varying contexts, as well as the social meanings carried by distinctive modes of communication.

I conducted interviews and recorded conversations to test Syrians' intuitions regarding the use of *dughri* and *musayra* as two politeness systems in Syrian society. Investigating *dughri* and *musayra* in Syrian culture helps reveal how these norms are shaped by the socio-cultural structure of society, and embedded by the public nature of obligations through conscious manipulation of "facework" and other related symbols.

Cultures differ in the degree to which other wants (such as the need for solidarity and involvement, in-group membership) are allowed to supersede face wants. In Arabic politeness, concepts like sincerity, solidarity, or honesty may legitimize a conscious suspension of face wants. The notion of privacy comes into play, especially when explaining the cultural differences between the Arabs and the British in the meanings of privacy.

This study of *dughri* and *musayra* politeness modes reveals some of the conditions of their use and what it means for the members of the culture to speak or be spoken to in a *dughri* or *musayra* manner. I deal with the

cultural meanings associated with these terms. Contrary to the prevailing politeness theories, these two politeness modes are used as positive politeness strategies, expressions of in-group membership and involvement. Directness and indirectness acquire different social and cultural meanings, but not as strategies of independence and negative politeness that emphasize individuality and the right not to be dominated by the group and social values. The aim is not to offer a comprehensive linguistic study of *dughri* and *musayra*, but rather to explore the different social values showing that politeness strategies are not universal.

This study also shows that Brown and Levinson's 'facework' model suffers serious shortcomings when applied to Arabic ways of speaking. One shortcoming has to do with its presentation of 'self,' (based on Western studies of communication) as highly individualistic and self-motivated. The Arabs project a more collectivistic self, one which is more connected to in-group membership. This is an attempt to explore how politeness is shaped by the socio-cultural structure of Arab society, and is something that causes translation problems.

This study calls for a greater awareness of the source culture's politeness routines to help the translator, as a negotiator, recognize differences in the target culture's practices, pinpoint problems of

understanding, and know how readers will read the TT. The translator has to assume a correlation between language and culture, and show extra sensitivity to the politeness procedures of the source culture as well as to those of the target culture. Any cross-cultural communication, including translation, must capture the subtle differences in face values between English and Arabic politeness modes.

The conclusion of the thesis summarizes the discussion of pragmatic politeness and shows the significance of incorporating politeness theories into translation studies. Politeness theories provide a means of specifying and comparing the variables involved in the selection of politeness strategies and linguistic forms. Achieving politeness equivalence should be considered a criterion for assessing the quality of translations. When the politeness norms of the ST differ from those of the TT, translators seek to make pragmatic adjustments; these do not necessarily guarantee that the TT will create the same response in the TT addressees. Pragmatic politeness strategies are performed mainly at the linguistic level, but are largely influenced by the translation policy in the TT, which is related to social, cultural and even economic pressures of the TT culture. This view is also relevant to the formulation of standards for translators' training programmes. Translators should know the similarities and differences between the

politeness patterns in the ST and the TT cultures and languages. Equally important is contrastive analysis in translation studies. Weighing the different politeness options will depend on the translator's knowledge of the two languages and cultures, and will help him/her make better decisions. For the translator, making the right politeness decisions will ensure compatibility with target language conventions without compromising source text 'difference' (Venuti, 1995: 99).

Politeness: Morality and Censorship with Reference to the
Arabian Nights

Politeness: Morality and Censorship with Reference to the *Arabian Nights*

1. The dynamics of translation in the 19th century

The sedate and philosophical turn from them with contempt; the gay and volatile laugh at their seeming absurdities; those of an elegant and correct taste are disgusted with their grotesque figures and fantastic imagery; and however we may be occasionally amused by their wild and diversified incidents, they are seldom thoroughly relished but by children, or by men whose imagination is complimented at the expense of their judgement. (Hole, 1779: 8)

The *Nights* is the creation of more than one culture; it is a work of folk or popular narrative. Its tales are thought to have been recited by professional storytellers, habitually depicted as enchanting their audience late into the night in public houses like coffee shops and taverns. The recitation of these tales takes somewhat of a dramatic performance. The *Nights* appealed to the tastes of the public because it represented all the social classes, from the Bedouin to the Caliph, including scholars, poets, merchants, fishermen, and bandits. The *Nights* moves towards the status of second-rate literature, far from scholarly literature “*adab*,” because it leans strongly toward pleasure, and not the seriousness which characterizes scholarly literature.

Studying the politeness of texts, or what makes a particular text accessible to a certain readership, incorporates the moral criteria that shape the literary trends of the time. The controversy surrounding the reception of *A Thousand and One Nights* in the English literature of the 18th century helps identify the fuzzy boundaries between translation and adaptation when the politeness issue is addressed. Clerical authorities had censored the translations as the Eastern tales did not live up to their Victorian moral standards: the stories were thought to have a negative impact on the minds of the vulnerable (women and children).

By way of setting the scene, an examination of the prominence of translation within Neo-classicism will help reveal how the translators of that age stylistically refined the foreign texts in accordance with the dominant English literary canons. The goal was to tone down the foreignness of the texts, to domesticate them and make them transparent allusions of the original compositions. This free translation was a Neo-Classical practice. A rhetorically oriented freedom of translation was often preferred to grammatical correctness. As Pope translated Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, he provided insights on how to transform the ruthless heroes of the original into English gentlemen. His translation or (rather the appropriation) of Greek texts was based on the systematic exclusion of what he considered insignificant details and physical references that failed to agree with moral sensibilities. Also, French literature was

particularly censored. The alleged absurdity, extravagance and immorality of French drama urged censors, through translation, to make changes in which moral considerations outweighed literary ones. Thus, the evaluation of any translation of that time demands a closer investigation of the editorial judgements and the Victorian political and social priorities. It is not coincidental that the majority of the adaptations, abridgements and selections of the *Nights* could be justified by the translators and the evaluators on the same grounds.

According to Sell (1991: 208-224), texts can be seen to conform or not conform to the dictates of politeness expectations at the time of their publication, what he calls the 'politeness of texts.' During the reading process, texts may be interpreted in accordance with a parameter of politeness, in which the reader reacts to the 'politeness in the text.' During the 19th century, politeness involved a view of man as both source and beneficiary of the blessings of civilization and intellectual enlightenment. Philosophically underpinned by Shaftesbury's ideals and moral sensibility, politeness was associated with aristocracy. Politeness meant a higher degree of mental cultivation and elegant refinement, polished manners and neo-classical taste. The 'politeness of texts' represented these qualities. Off-record strategies, with "face-threatening acts" (FTAs) veiled in metaphor, irony, understatement, hints and so on, were the most polite strategies. These strategies served the Victorian

morality, as advocated by Lane, whose omission policy provoked no reaction at all.

In studying the politeness of texts, Sell (1991) introduced the concepts of 'selectional' and 'presentational' politeness. On the one hand, as in the *Nights*, Lane maintained selectional politeness. Lane observed all the taboos and conventions of social and moral decorum operative within his culture, never using any face-threatening words, whether positively or negatively. Selectional politeness embraces the underlying interaction between translators and readers, where the choice of some types of subject matter constitutes a face-threatening act. Under-selection would rule out much of the Victorian readers' pleasure of reading texts. On the other hand, Burton maintained absolute presentational politeness. He never left the readers in doubt as to what was happening, what was meant, or why it was being said. Dull over-presentation would rule out certain elements of surprise, suspense, or intellectual and moral stimulus, leaving the reader with too little work to do for, and with less opportunity for engagement with the text.

Although Leech (1983: 104-105) considers politeness largely irrelevant as an aspect of most written discourse, I would argue that the politeness of texts is vital because writing or translating is interaction that involves writers or translators with society at large. As Fraser (1990: 219-336) points out, the 'social-norm' view of politeness posits standards of

behaviour according to which the translator is deemed to translate politely or not. This implies that social sanctions would be applied if these standards were not met.

There is also the ‘face-saving’ view of politeness, which stems from Brown and Levinson’s theory (1978). This view offers a more – influential paradigm for linguistic politeness going beyond Grice’s maxims. Brown and Levinson interpret polite behaviour as basic to the maintenance of the addressee’s face wants. Politeness is a dynamic principle, always open to adaptation and change in any social group. Politeness is a standard that one expects to exist in every interaction whether written or spoken. Readers note not when someone is being polite – this is the norm – but rather when the writer or translator is violating the rules. Some translations, like Burton’s, challenge existing norms of politeness, if only to win attention and be interesting.

The politeness of the *Nights* lends itself to diachronic study because of the responses of earlier readers. It is almost a cliché that all great works that shock and surprise are often canonized as great literature. By studying the politeness portrayed in and expressed by, the *Nights*, we see that human behaviour and the meanings of moral terms are forever in flux. The following is a rule-based and socio-linguistic analysis of the *Nights* and an account of the translators’ choices and their motives. Studying the responses of earlier readers will reveal the politeness issues

that the *Nights* raised, what was said about them and how the social imperatives oriented the translations.

2. 19th-century translations and neo-classical criticism

According to Duncan Macdonald's "A Bibliographical and Literary Study of the First Appearance of the *Arabian Nights* in Europe" (*Library Quarterly*, October 1932), Antoine Galland's *Mille et une nuits* (1704-17) was the first, though partial, translation of the *Nights*. Whether reliable or not, Galland's translation stirred up interest in Eastern culture. Galland's version was designed to appeal to the public by altering the style, content and tone of the original Arabic. He had no hesitation in 'improving' the Arabic original by removing coarse expressions, expanding and deleting as he saw fit.

Then came Edward Lane's family version of the *Nights* (1839-41) which, paradoxically, transformed the *Nights* into a work for women and children, plagued by allegations and depressing censorship policies. While Lane was well acquainted with the customs and manners of the Easterners, his literary judgements governed by cultural dictates led him to exclude a lot of stories in whole or in part. His heavily edited translation reveals his preferences and adherence to the stereotyped beliefs of his age. Lane's translation strategy will be discussed later.

In like manner, John Pyne in his 1870's translation of the *Nights* eliminated erotica, and presented its literary merits, regardless of the controversy it aroused. He toned down the language of the 'obscene passages', and turned the 'vulgar' Arabic into 'mannered' English.

Then came Sir Richard Burton (1821-90), whose translation, along with Pyne's, was available only to subscribers. He claimed that his version of the *Nights* was "plain and literal." But, his work was criticized for following his own inclination for the erotic and the grotesque. Burton thought that some of the stories of the *Nights* were not erotic enough, so he exaggerated their obscenity. The apologetic tone of the dedication of his translation illuminates his embarrassment regarding its sexual contents. Although some of the original stories were agreeably erotic, Burton went out of his way to amplify their obscenity, and made additions to his original.

Although Henry Weber, in *Tales of the East*, advocated open-mindedness and esteemed qualities, he was not immune from amending the *Nights* to "the extreme of stupidity and silliness" (1812: xiv).

Gradually, the *Nights'* influential aspects started to emerge, as scores of critics and prominent figures accorded high status to the tales in their literary curricula. R. Mayo (1962:40, 302, 303, 248) has mentioned in *The English Novel in the Magazines* that the *Nights* represented the

Eastern mode of writing which was alien to European culture, a conflict between two worlds and a clash between two ideologies.

As the editor of the *Monthly Mirror* and *General Magazine*, Thomson Bellamy helped to establish regulations governing the material issued in literary magazines. As a man of literary reputation and a public figure, he did not want to upset the more conservative readers by the publication of the *Nights*. Thus, in his preface to *The Mirror* in 1795, he presented his readers with the following guidelines for texts, which posed a potential moral threat:

Every subject will be *ipso facto* a moral tale. Regard will be uniformly had to Purity of Sentiments, that nothing may misguide the heart or defile the ear – the parent may read them to his child, and the Child be instructed. Sensibility shall receive no shock, and Morality no injury; for the great object of the writer will never be forgotten, and that is to investigate the Virtue and to deter from Vice (Mayo, 1962: 302, 303, 248).

As the *Nights* presented a challenge to neo-classical criticism and thought, the text was received with caution if not disgust. Reviews started pouring out the Neo-classicists' opposition to what they considered disturbing to their traditional literary tastes of the period. Their criticism centred heavily on the *Nights*' violation of Victorian rules of behaviour and moral agenda. Critics like Atterbury, Henry James Pye, and Lord Kames condemned the barbarism and vulgarism of the *Nights*. When corresponding with Alexander Pope, Atterbury rebuked him for what he

considered a worthless, immoral and insignificant piece of literature (1871, IX, 22-23). He states:

I have read as much of them, as ever I shall read while I live. Indeed, they do not please my taste: they are written with so Romantik air, and allowing for the difference of Eastern manners, are yet, upon my Supposition that can be made of so wild and absurd a contrivance at least to my northern understanding that I have no pleasure, and no patience in pursuing them.

Atterbury warned Victorian readers of the extravagance, monstrosity, and moral corruption of the tales, irrespective of their literary merits. Atterbury's moral considerations were validated on the grounds that the imitation of Eastern modes of behaviour in the *Nights* might undermine the foundations of Victorian morality.

Similar ideas were advocated by James Beattie, who in *On Fable and Romance* (1783) dubbed the *Nights* a product of people driven by their desire and ignorance. For him, the narration of stories was some Eastern prince's ideal way to spend leisure time and be pampered. Beattie (1783: 510-511), accused the Easterner of "being ignorant, and consequently credulous, having no passion for moral improvements, and little knowledge of nature, [and that] he does not desire that they [the tales] should be probable, or of an instructive tendency." An example of this for Beattie was the supernatural element of the tales, represented by lengthy accounts of fairies, jinn and witchcraft. Beattie believed that,

since the element of reason was absent, it was hardly possible for Easterners' tastes to be refined by art or literature. This conveys Beattie's intolerance of the *Nights*, as it described people who lived around building grand palaces, satisfying their urges, and indulging in luxury. According to him, the *Nights* celebrated pure invention that "does not elevate the mind or touch the heart." All that can be elicited from Beattie's account is that the *Nights* lacked any literary value, and was a document of mere fancy, having little relevance to the social repositories of knowledge.

In *The Sketches of the history of Man* (1778), Lord Kames voiced the belief that the weakness of romances like the *Nights* is that they celebrate the supernatural, which he assumed to be the passion of savages. The people of the *Nights*, led by their passions, do not have the taste of Europeans, a taste refined by the arts. The Easterners take liberty with the common standard of right and wrong, and do not conform to "the moral standard among polite nations." (1778, I, 200). Earl Anthony Shaftesbury in *Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times*, supported Kames' views. Shaftesbury objected to the "Moorish fancy which prevails strongly at the present time: Monsters and monster land were never more in request; and we may often see a philosopher, or wit, run a tale-gathering in these idle deserts as familiarly as the silliest woman or merest boy." (1900, 221-225). Indirectly, he referred to the plots of some

of the tales in the *Nights*. For Shaftesbury, the customs, laws, and manners of the East can be revealed in the ‘vulgarity’ of the original text. For him, the impoliteness of the *Nights* was similar to that of the French romances, celebrating imagination and lacking logic.

The Neo-Classicists' antagonism focused on the irritating improbable in the *Nights*, and the inappropriate manners of its characters. This attitude was reflected in the way the Victorian translators rendered the text, as this study will show later.

3. The “New” *Nights*

The numerous different translations of the *Nights* indicate the lack of a complete, trustworthy edition. Adding, dropping, and reshuffling of the stories was largely governed by personal convictions and social dictates of right or wrong. Because personal factors and social obligations played a vital role in revising or (mishandling) the *Nights*, many editors and translators never worded it in the same manner. Patrick Russell, the author of the *Natural History of Aleppo*, wrote an article in *The Gentleman's Magazine* (LXIX: 92) questioning the authenticity of the *Arabian Nights*. Although he endorsed Galland's tendency to omit some offensive passages, he felt that the way Galland expurgated the *Nights* was unreliable. Galland took great liberty with the division of the tales, rewrote conclusions and descriptions of some others, and omitted those

that did not conform to French manners. Russell points out that Richardson (in his *Grammar*) was also aware of the flaws in Galland's translation. Richardson noticed that, in some stories, "deviation from the original was greater than even a free translation seemed to require." (Russell, 1799: 92). It was not only that Galland re-ordered the succession of the stories; he softened the language, and added his own commentaries and explanations to the European reader, going far beyond the original script. Richardson added that "There are many more of these fables in the original Arabic which have not yet been introduced to the English reader, and which would probably form a valuable acquisition to the innocent stock in our language." (Russell, 1799: 9).

Different translators rendered the introductory story in various ways. It includes the introductory scene where the king's wife is found copulating with a black slave. A Victorian child's version relates the story in the following manner:

"Shahriyar had a wife whom he loved dearly and many slaves to carry out his smallest wish. He should have been one of the happiest men in the world, and so he was, until one day he found his wife plotting against him. He put her to death at once, but still his rage was not satisfied."

(Soifer, M and Shapiro, I, 1957: 9).

For children, the *Nights* was appreciated for its magic and adventures, since the erotic was left out. The wife was killed because of treason, not because of her affair with the black slave. Although the

Nights was not intended for children, many translations were widely popular and circulated among them, in order to stimulate their mental capabilities and to strengthen their appreciation of literary works. Against this background, P. Caracciolo (1988) argues that even the previously edited 19th-century translations had to be re-tailored to preserve the innocence and delicacy of the youth.

For the most recent readers of the *Nights*, the English translation of above episode reads as follows:

“Then they sat down, took off their clothes, and suddenly there were ten slave girls and ten black slaves dressed in the same clothes as the girls. Then the ten black slaves mounted the ten girls, while the lady called, “Mas’ud, Mas’ud” and a black slave jumped from the tree to the ground, rushed into her, and, raising her legs, went between her thighs and made love to her. Mas’ud topped the lady, while the ten slaves topped the ten girls, and they carried on till noon.” (Haddaway, 1990: 5).

The difference between the Victorian translation and the modern one can be justified on the grounds that offensive language as an FTA (a Face-Threatening Act) violated the Victorian taboos concerning sexual, class and ethnic boundaries.

Henry Weber, in the introduction to his own translation of the *Nights* (1792: 9, 28-29) explained that blue-pencilling the tales was necessary to avoid the bad influences that they might have on the minds of the youth. Weber’s awareness led him to cut and paste the oriental

peculiarities, and to speculate that 'his tales' would not provoke the public because they had been presented in a Western camouflage.

Similarly, A. Pote, the editor of *The Foreign Quarterly Review* (XXIV, Oct. 1839: 141) backed Edward's Lane translation due to:

"The learned editor's [Lane's] intimate knowledge of Arabian manners, feelings, and prejudices, his thorough acquaintance with the language and the character of the natives; and the just confidence he has won by his Description of its modern Taste. The work and the translator were made expressly for each other; and henceforth only those who would be ignorant of the *Arabian Nights* can be ignorant of Mr. Lane's annotations."

The editor showed sympathy that Lane had to undergo the pain of reading the original 'crude' Arabic tales.

The exclusion of highly sexual passages characterizes Edward Lane's translation. He admitted in his preface to the *Nights* that "It is complete with the exception of a few stories, which are unsuited for publication in English." (1839: 5). Lane's translation was aimed at children's libraries, as the tales extravagantly describe the doings of jinn, fairies and magicians with supernatural powers. In comparison, Burton's translation was available for subscribers only.

Irwin (1994) clarifies that the sexual themes in the *Nights* range from sadism, adultery, illicit love affairs, polygamy, the description of the wanton manners of women as adulteresses, witches, and prostitutes, to forbidden relationships between mothers and sons. Adultery can be

considered the plot mover of the *Nights*. Also, there are lengthy dialogues about homosexuality, whether it is better to love a man or a woman and the pleasures of sex. There are also passages where characters get slapped and pinched. The singing girls were viewed as seductresses who offered all sorts of bawdy entertainment. In addition to that, the *Nights* depicts widespread fantasies on the part of medieval Arabs about the exceptional sexual powers of black men, their virility and lust.

To fairly assess how the 19th century translators handled the *Nights* in the light of their moral agenda, I shall analyze Lane's and Burton's translations, in comparison to the original Bulaq text. The majority of Victorian readers enjoyed reading a text that went far beyond the original. As readers entertained themselves with reading the heroic epics, rhetorical debates, jokes, fables and wisdom literature, they did not realize how much the book itself suffered at the hands of the moral watchdogs of the Victorian age. Whether the 19th-century critics considered the *Nights* simply a matter of bad literary taste or not, this reflects an important phase of literary translation.

4. Orientalism and its influence on 19th century translation strategies

In the Victorian age, the translation of 'politeness' in the *Nights* was immensely affected by misconceptions about the East and Islam. The *Nights* was alien to the Victorian society because of the culture's image

of Islam, as a moral threat to the European reader. The West's dominant image of Islam was that of corruption, tyranny and cruelty. As the Europeans had contact with the Ottoman world, Islamic morality was under examination. Not a few Europeans ridiculed the sexual freedom of the Easterners, and portrayed Islam as a religion of romance and erotica. Most clerical authorities in Europe harshly judged the lavish life of the Easterners, and the glamour and grandeur of Eastern courts. The Western image of the Islamic world was that of a world full of servitude, eunuchs, polygamy and illicit love affairs. This attitude shows a prejudice against Islam as a religion, in conflict with the moral values of Christianity, the religion of the West. This assessment of the social conditions of the Muslim world can be traced in many Western travel accounts. Lady Mary Montagu's correspondence (1717, 1718) considered the manners of Turkish ladies with whom she was acquainted a real representation of the manners and customs of the *Nights*.

In the 19th-century, there was a growing systematic knowledge of the East, focusing on the unusual and the alien. Added to this was a large body of translations produced by scholars like Edward Lane and Richard Burton. The Oriental was depicted as irrational, uncivilized and abnormal, while the European was moral, civilized and normal (Said, 1995). Translation was a means of containing the East within the dominant frameworks. It was the medium through which the East was

experienced, and translators shaped the perception and form of encounters between the two civilizations. Translation was seen as a method of controlling a received threat to the established view of the world. It was this vision of reality that shaped the translators' strategies. Lane and Burton translated the *Nights* with some fixed, abstract maxims about Eastern civilization that they had studied in Europe prior to their residence in the East. The Eastern world in their *Nights* was no longer threatening, since the contents had been accommodated to the moral exigencies of Western civilization. The *Nights* suffered a loss of originality since the mode of translation was, from the beginning, reconstruction. As both translators confronted the peculiarities of the *Nights* with some detachment, the sensuality, pleasure and energy of the East as portrayed by the text were left out.

Politeness theory offers an explanatory framework on cultural patterning: the Eastern mode is constructed on social closeness and solidarity, while the dominating societies are built on a more stern system of social distance and asymmetry. Politeness in the *Nights* was affected because Lane and Burton brought versions of the SL (source language) text into the TL (target language) culture through extreme views on the lowliness of the SL text. This patronizing attitude towards the text indicated a form of elitism. Translators of the *Nights* sought to upgrade the moral status of the SL text because it was perceived as being on a

lower cultural level. Any study of politeness should relate to the dominant political system, because “cultures cannot be understood or studied without their force, or their configuration of power” (Said, 1978: 5). The relationship between the text and the translator is that of power, of domination. Said’s work demonstrates how Europe’s geopolitical awareness of its ‘exotic’ other was distributed into aesthetic representations as well as economic, sociological, and historical texts, all of which provided a heterogeneous discourse of power through which the Orient was colonized. Said argues that Orientalist representations are not “natural depictions of the Orient,” but constitute the backbone of “a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of complex hegemony between the Occident and the Orient” (Said: 5-21). For him, Orientalism is “a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the ‘Orient’ and the ‘Occident’.”

To divide the world into Occident/Orient is to create a paradigm to justify the appropriation of the Oriental Other. The orientalist/translator can then act as a ‘judge of the Orient’ and as an ‘egoistic observer’ who represents and appropriates the Oriental Other for the benefit of the imperial power. (Said: 115). This embodies the Orientalist stereotype of the Orient as a morally decadent region. The 19th century orientalists/translators of the *Nights* judged the Other according to

European norms and values, with misconstruction of Oriental sexual relations. They had the power of interpretation and judgement, and, accordingly, appropriation.

Translation in the Victorian era was dominated by one idea: European culture as superior to Eastern culture. The Victorian age was known for a general appetite for knowledge, addiction to enquiry, and desire for intellectual control. The English translator felt himself to be mentally superior to the characters in the *Nights*. The East was judged on its similarity to or difference from the West. To be different was to remain in a state of otherness, of inferiority; to be similar was to progress. Both Lane and Burton absorbed from their education, from the readings of their youth, many of the qualities with which they were destined to endow the East. Burton showed a great dislike of non-western people, especially the black. His translation reflected a strong racial bias. Victorian anthropology was a system for the hierarchical classification of race. According to the Victorians, the Anglo-Saxon race was the most advanced, the master race *par excellence*. Burton shared his culture's belief that Easterners were creatures of instinct, controlled by sexual passions, incapable of the refinement to which the Anglo-Saxon race had evolved. The *Nights* became popular particularly because it upheld a pre-established idea of the East. The translator's image is of someone who is

interpreting – making sense of the Orient-and authoritatively creating meaning.

Orientalism affected the politeness strategies of both Lane and Burton, since their translations had to address European readers. Their personalities and personal lives reflected much of the political attitude towards the East, and affected their two approaches to the politeness of their translations of the *Nights*. Each used the *Nights* to express his personality and his predispositions, and both texts illustrate the contradictory penchants of the Victorian age.

Lane adopted the policy of abridgements, excluding dangerous sex and everything that seemed to offend sexual propriety and domestic seemliness. In politeness terms, these FTAs might offend the Victorian reader's face. By doing so, he indicated that both he and the Victorian reader shared specific wants, goals and values. He also stressed membership with his readers in Victorian society. In Lane's case FTAs not only stand for face-threatening acts, but also for 'face threatening intentions.' His knowledge of the East was the result of selective accumulation, displacement, deletion and rearrangement, which stemmed from social, political and religious authority. He resided in the East in order to provide material for scientific observation, as is evident in his other book, *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (1836). Lane's translation of the *Nights* was a pretext for a long sociological

discourse on the East. He could not help falling victim to the common distortion of selectivity of choosing to stress what would interest a Western reader. The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, which assisted Lane financially, did so because he fulfilled its aspirations. Quoted as a source of knowledge about Arabia, Lane offered the Society a picture of the East for Western consumption and coloured by Western biases.

Lane translated the *Nights* with methodical studiousness and mathematical neatness. As a translator, he entered Muslim society only far enough to describe it in English prose. Lane's translation of the *Nights* was dispassionate enough to convince the English reader that Lane had escaped the influences of an alien culture. His untidy details are a signal of his refusal to join Eastern society. However, he gained scholarly credibility, of high value to the academic institutions in Europe. He domesticated the *Nights*, filtering it through regulatory codes of behaviour, and reproduced it for Western society. Lane introduced, footnoted, and interrupted the text under the guise of scholarship. The result was a genteel narrative that conformed to the ethical codes of middle class morality.

Burton translated the FTAs (the taboo topics), including obscene passages, in a direct, unambiguous way. He rendered the FTAs thus as a contribution to the anthropological data he had been gathering for years.

He did not fear retribution from the Victorian authorities, his addressees, because of a subscription society, both to raise money and to diminish the risk of being prosecuted for obscenity. As Rana Kabbani (1988: 45-62) points out, one of the most curious features of Burton's translation is the use of the obstructive and supernumerary footnotes. Burton desired recognition in the world of learning as an anthropologist and scientist, although Lane's edition had already provided the necessary information about Muslim manners and material life. Out of rivalry with Lane, Burton seems to have been driven to annotate more, and to treat more recondite matters in his footnotes. Burton's footnotes were often irrelevant to the text they were annotating, mere additions for the purposes of entertainment and erotic highlights. Burton used the *Nights* to express himself, to articulate his sexual preoccupations. He made the *Nights* serve as an occasion for documenting all manners of sexual deviation, congress with animals, sexual mutilation, castration; all these were given prolonged attention. He even discussed sexual diseases in detail, although this focus could only signal the sexual unease and social repressiveness of the Victorian age.

Burton believed himself to be an expert on sex. Cumulatively, his notes are an encyclopaedia of curious sexual lore. Sexual obsession often came to the fore in Burton's scientific footnotes. He theorized a 'sotadic zone', including the Mediterranean region and most of the Islamic lands,

where homosexuality was the norm. He also believed that the Persians were born pederasts. According to Burton, the harems of Syria were active centres of 'sapphism.' He bears a huge responsibility for fostering the myth of the erotic and exploitable East.

However, Burton was at odds not only with the East, but also with the Colonial offices, the clerical authorities, and most of the literary and academic world in Europe. He had little reward from Europe for his 'plain' translation of the *Nights*. In his preface, Burton was trying to demonstrate that he had more knowledge of the East than any other scholar. Because of his interventions, Burton is the present character in the *Nights*, the detached Westerner, and the authoritative commentator on Eastern society. According to Said (1995: 195), although Burton was individualistic, he had a strong identification with Europe. He was in a struggle between individualism and a feeling of identification with Europe as an imperial power. Burton was both a rebel (as the East represented freedom from Victorian morality), and an agent for colonial authority in the East. Burton exhibited self-exoticism in both mimetic identification with the exotic Other, and differential (or negative) identification, i.e. 'I'm not the Other'.

The colonial translator is always a mediator. As a discourse of power, the translated text represses mediation because it demonstrates constructed meaning. Burton's footnotes are meant to testify to his

victory over the scandalous system of European Knowledge about the East. Readers are never given the East; everything is presented by way of Burton's knowledgeable interventions. He is "a European for whom such knowledge of Oriental society as he has is possible only for a European, with European self-awareness of society as a collection of rules and practices." (Said: 169). Burton breaks the Victorian taboos of masking sexuality, yet he does so by speaking of sexuality in a removed setting, the East.

5. Patterns of Politeness in the English Translation of the *Nights*

Studying the politeness network in the English translation of the *Nights* involves the ideologies prevalent in the Victorian era. Orientalism, ethnocentricity, or domestication influenced the translation (the rewriting) of the *Nights* according to the moral values of Victorian England. Victorian translators tried to reconstitute their politeness system in the *Nights* in accordance with the values, beliefs and representations that existed in the target-language culture. Changing the politeness system in the translation of the *Nights* was part of the replacement of the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text, creating a text that would be more polite to the target-culture readers. As a result, whatever difference the translation of the *Nights* conveys is influenced by the target-culture canons, taboos, codes, and ideologies.

The translation of the *Nights* could have been published and read more easily if it had not been in conflict with Victorian standards for acceptable behaviour and the culture's ideology. Because the *Nights* clashed with Victorian ideology, translators like Lane felt the need to adapt the text so that the offending passages were severely modified or left out altogether. The decisions that the 19th century translators made regarding what to translate were based largely on considerations of what was dangerous or unacceptable in Victorian ideology (ethically, socially and morally). Selective faithfulness was preferred, since the manners of Victorian culture were considered superior to those of the Eastern cultures, of the ST (the source culture). This ethnocentric attitude, which moved the Victorian translators to remake the world in their image, affected the politeness relations in the text. The politeness in the TT (the target text) is tailored to the target culture exclusively, and screens out what does not comply with it.

The following is an examination of the politeness relations in the *Nights* as inspired by Brown and Levinson and other linguists. Comparing the translators' different reactions towards the 'not-so-polite' passages in the *Nights* reveals the prejudices of Victorian translation. How politeness is defined in texts, and the ways in which it is realized in different cultural frameworks are related to the processes of social behaviour. The study of politeness in the translation of the *Nights* will

focus on the presentation, maintenance, and even the adjustment of the 'presentation of self' (Goffman 1959) and culturally acceptable patterns of behaviour. In other words, politeness can be interpreted as one of the constraints on human behaviour which help members of society achieve 'effective social living'. Politeness has to correspond to the norms of polite behaviour as perceived by members of socio-cultural groups. Politeness functions to: 1) maximize the benefit to self and other; 2) minimize the face-threatening nature of a social act; 3) display proficiency in the standards of social etiquette; 4) avoid conflict; 5) ensure smooth social interaction.

Brown and Levinson (1978) proposed that the three main strategies of politeness, 'positive politeness' (the expression of solidarity), 'negative politeness' (the expression of restraint), and 'off-record' politeness (the avoidance of unequivocal imposition), are all tied to social determinants. Because politeness is socially controlled, the mutual awareness of 'face-sensitivity' dictates politeness policies. The notion of 'face' is linked to some of the most fundamental cultural ideas about the nature of the social person, honour and virtue, shame and redemption, and thus to moral and religious aspects. Also, different cross-cultural views of what constitutes 'good social behaviour' are what the politeness model is designed to accommodate. Studying politeness in the translation of the *Nights* shows how face regard and sanctions for face disregard are incorporated in

religious and political systems. It is necessary to distinguish between the institutional, status-based requirements of face (the Victorian society) and the more-personal side, individual feelings of others (Burton). This distinction partially correlates with on-record vs. off-record forms of politeness. There are cultural differences that work into the linguistic details of the face-redressive strategies preferred by a given society or group.

Following Brown and Levinson's theory, I suggest that there is a Modal Person in translation similar to the one in verbal interaction. The Modal Person (MP) in translation is the translator who is expected to be neutral, faithful, and endowed with rationality and face. In other words, this MP in translation is endowed with two wants – the desire for unimpeded translation and the need for his translation to be approved. This MP model will provide essential information about translation as a written interchange between translators and readers, and the factors that might affect this relationship. The translation of the politeness of the following tale from the *Nights* reveals how close Lane and Burton are to the MP. The closer both translators are to the MP, the more faithful they are to the ST. Following Brown and Levinson's model, I suggest that all MPs choose methods to satisfy their readers' face, whether positive or negative. Face consists of a set of wants, which can only be satisfied by the actions of others. Thus it is in the mutual interest of Burton, Lane and

their readers to maintain each other's face. Due to the mutual vulnerability of face, rational translators employ strategies to avoid face-threatening acts (FTAs), and minimize the threat. The translator considers the relative weights of three wants: to communicate the content of the FTA, to be efficient and, to maintain the readers' face. In the Victorian context, FTAs relate to any material considered to be morally shameful, like language referring to body parts, descriptions of sexual intercourse, homosexuality, lesbianism, and any other morally corrupting aspects. The description of sexual intercourse in the story "King Shahriyar and his brother Shahzaman" is an FTA to the Victorian reader. This tale poses a moral threat that is associated with sexuality.

For making comparison, here is the story in the original Arabic:

"وإذا بباب السر الذي لقصر أخيه قد فتح و خرجت الست زوجة أخيه و هي بين عشرين جارية (عشرة بيض و عشرة سود) فجلسوا تحت القصر و قلعوا ثيابهم و إذ صارت العشرة عبيد سود و العشرة جوار و كان لبسهم لبس الجوار. فوقعت العشرة على العشرة، و صاحبت الست يا مسعود يا مسعود، فنط عبد أسود من فوق الشجرة إلى الأرض و صار في الحال عندها و شال سيقانها و دخل بين أوراكاها و وقع عليها، و صارت العشرة على العشرة و مسعود فوق الست، و لم يزالوا كذلك إلى نصف النهار". (محسن مهدي، كتاب ألف ليلة و ليلة، ص: ٥٩).

Lane translates this tale thus:

"A door of the palace was opened and there came forth from it twenty females and twenty male black slaves; and the king's wife, who was distinguished by extraordinary beauty and elegance, accompanied them to a fountain, where they all disposed themselves, and sat down together. The King's wife then called out, 'O Mes'ood!' and immediately a black slave came to her and *saluted* her; she is doing the like. So also did the other slaves and the women; all of them continued *revelling* until the close of the day."

(Lane, 1839: 11, italics mine).

Burton translates the episode as follows:

“Then they *stripped off their clothes* and behold, ten of them were women, concubines of the king, and the other ten were white slaves. Then they all paired off, each with each: but the queen who was left alone, presently cried out in a loud voice, ‘Here to me, O my lord Saeed!’ and then sprang with a drop-leap from one of the trees a big slobbering blackamoor with rolling eyes which showed the whites, a truly hideous sight. He walked boldly up to her and threw his arms around *her neck while she embraced him as warmly; then he kissed her and winding his legs around her, he threw her and enjoyed her.* On like wise did the other slaves with the girls till all had satisfied their passion, and they ceased not from *kissing, and clipping, coupling and carousing* and all till day began to wane.”

(Burton, 1885, vol. I : 4, italics mine).

Lane omits the sexual descriptions, as his translation is highly genteel, conforming to the ethical codes of middle-class morality. In politeness terms, on the one hand, Lane goes off-record to mask the sexual FTA by translating “و شال سيقانها و دخل بين أوراكها و وقع عليها” as “saluted her,” and “و صارت العشرة فوق العشرة و مسعود فوق الست” as “revelling.” On the other hand, Burton goes on-record and translates the above as “he threw his arms around her and winding his legs around her, he threw her and enjoyed her.” “They ceased not from kissing, clipping, and carousing till all had satisfied their passion.” The Victorian readers’ face has been protected and attended to by Lane’s off-record strategy, while it has been lost in Burton’s on-record strategy. Lane maintains selectivity of material and vocabulary to ensure that the episode is morally proper. His tone remains dry, in contrast to the material he is

describing. Words like “kissing”, “clipping”, “coupling” and “carousing”, in Burton’s translation are changed to “saluting” and “revelling” in Lane’s, reflecting the translators’ different approaches towards politeness in the text. Also, respect for face reveals societal norms (or values). Burton’s flamboyant translation threatens the positive face of his Victorian readers, expressing disapproval of their moral codes by translating taboo topics on-record.

The politeness system in the translation is influenced by the translator – orientalist approach. The Victorian moralists often projected onto foreign women the sexual drives that they denied the bourgeois wives. The East was an illicit place and its women convenient chattel who offered sexual gratification denied in the Victorian home for its unseemliness. Eastern women were portrayed as faithless, lewd and wanton, who would cheat on their husbands and copulate with anyone, anywhere. Everything about the East exuded dangerous sex, and threatened the domestic seamliness of Victorian society with an excessive freedom of intercourse.

In politeness terms, if a breach of face occurs, this constitutes a debt that must be paid up by positive reparation if the original level of face is to be regained. Reparation should be of an appropriate kind, and proportionate. Translators should have adequate reasons for threatening the readers’ face. The apparatus works this way: the maintenance of

social order depends upon the appropriate kind and degree of respect being shown towards persons, things, ideas and symbols. This includes paying respect to the patterned and stereotyped. There are stabilized expectations about how members will react to FTAs, especially the gravity with which they will treat them. That is why Lane adopts the off-record strategy as he tries to conform to the stereotyped in the Victorian society. Burton goes on-record in translating morally sensitive material. He repairs the breach of the Victorian readers' face by translating in a remote setting, the East. By doing so, he protects Victorian virtue and indicates that European morals are superior to those of the Eastern nations. The tale of "Shahriyar and Shahzaman and the Jinni's wife" shows how both translators preserve their readers' face:

"فقال لا بد من نزولكم، وإن تنزلوا عندي وإلا نبهت العفريت وأدعه يقتلكم. ثم أشارت إليهم وألحت عليهم فنزلوا من على الشجرة قليلاً قليلاً حتى صاروا قدامها، فرقدت على ظهرها ورفعت رجليها وقالت جامعوني واقضوا غرضي وإلا نبهت العفريت يقتلكم. ثم ألحت عليهم فما قدروا أن يخالفوها، فجامعها الكبير ثم الصغير. ولما فرغوا وقاموا عنها قالت لهم أعطوني خواتمكم. ثم أخرجت من بين أثوابها كيس صغير فخرجت منه ثمانية وتسعين خاتم مختلفات الألوان والصياغات وقالت: أصحاب هذه الخواتم كلها جامعوني وكل من جامعني أخذت منه خاتم فأعطوني خواتمكم حتى أضيفهما ويكون قد اكتشفني مائة رجل على قرن هذا العفريت الأذنس الأقرن".
(كتاب ألف ليلة وليلة، ص: ٦٤).

Lane reduces the sexual intercourse in the original text into "conversation" in his translation:

"But she said, I conjure you by the same that ye come down; and if ye do not, I will rouse this Efreet, and he shall put you to a cruel death. So being afraid they came down to her; and after they had remained with her as long as she required, she took from her pocket a purse, and drew out from this a string, upon which

ninety-eight seal rings; and she said to them, Know ye what are these? The owners of these rings, said she, have all of them had *the same conversation* with me which you have, unknown to this foolish 'Efreet; therefore, give me your two rings, ye brothers."

(Lane: 13, italics mine).

Burton adopts a different politeness strategy and goes on-record describing the FTA (the sexual act) in the most direct way:

"So, being afraid, they came down to her and she rose before them and said, '*Stroke me a strong stroke, without delay*, otherwise I will arouse this and set upon you this Ifrit who shall slay you straightway. And they began disputing about *futtering* her. At this, by reason of their sore dread of the Jinni, both did by her what she bade them do and, when they dismounted from her, she said 'Well done!' She took from her pocket a purse and drew out a knotted string, whereon were strung five hundred and seventy seal rings, and asked 'Know ye what be these?' Then quoth she; "These be the signets of *five hundred and seventy men who have all futtered me* upon the horns of this foul, this foolish, this filthy Ifrit; so give me also your two seal rings, ye pair of brothers.

(Burton, vol. I: 11-12, italics mine).

Lane and Burton adopt different politeness strategies to protect the face of the Victorian readership. Throughout his translation, Lane uses two politeness policies: going off-record and "Do not do the FTA at all." "Do not do the FTA at all" is maintained when Lane chooses to cut out the sentences "فرقدت على ظهرها و رفعت رجليها و قالت جامعوني و اقضوا غرضي", so the focal point is missed. By doing so, he wants to prevent any corruption of Victorian virtue. He cuts out the following sentences "أصحاب هذه الخواتم كلهم جامعوني و كل من جامعني أخذت منه خاتم" without indicating where his cuts are. Going off-record is noticeable when Lane

saves face by understating the inappropriate event (the sex act) and not giving it directly to his readers. Understatement includes substituting the word “conversation” for “futtering.” By going off-record, Lane avoids offending the virtuous Victorian women, and dismisses the image of women as inappropriate. Lane thus fails to achieve effective communication. One of the disadvantages of off-record politeness strategy is that, although more polite, it is less informative. In using the word “conversation”, Lane cannot be held to have committed himself to a particular intent. Lane is a reductionist, seeking politeness in an immoral book.

Burton goes on-record by exaggerating the number of men who have sexual intercourse with the woman from ninety-eight men in the Arabic text to five hundred and seventy men in his translation. This mode of translation can be related to the translator’s personality. One of Burton’s traits was defying authority by breaking any imposed rule in as startling a manner as possible. His fascination with the *Nights* was greatly enhanced by the fact that they held his own views on women, race and class. He used the *Nights* to articulate his own sexual preoccupations. He made it serve as an occasion for documenting all manners of sexual deviation.

Although Burton did the FTA, mentioning the act of “futtering” and “stroking,” he does not go on-record baldly, but with redress. Burton

goes on-record with negative politeness referring directly to the sexual intercourse (FTA) with the two brothers in a way that he can pay respect and deference to the reader. Going on-record with negative politeness is avoidance-based, and aimed at maintaining the reader's face. Burton maintains the distance between himself and the 'not-so-polite' Easterners by describing the sex act in an alien setting, the East. Representations of women in the *Nights* were in keeping with the general Victorian prejudice towards Eastern women. Burton preserves politeness by showing the difference between the Westerners and Easterners. His alienation from the 'Other,' was because the alien, the East was offensive to Victorian thought. He managed to break the Victorian taboo of sexuality, but only in a removed setting, the East.

Burton redresses the face breach by showing that the translation of FTAs is motivated by his desire to provide knowledge about the East. In doing so, he tries to 'give face' or 'compensate for the loss of face' caused by his translation. Burton opts for a negative redressive action that allows him to satisfy to a certain extent the readers' face wants. In this respect, negative politeness is specific and focused; it minimizes the alien Eastern values' imposition on English readers. The result of this policy is social distancing between the European readers and the East. Burton attempts to counteract the face damage of the FTA with some modifications and additions. His lengthy endnotes offer an abundance of

anthropological information regarding every aspect of Eastern life. This is a good gesture implying that no face breach is intended, and that Burton recognizes and desires to fulfil the readers' face wants.

There are payoffs from both Lane's and Burton's politeness policies; for example from not translating or translating the incest incident in the story "The First Royal Mendicant":

"يا بن أخي أخبرك أن هذا ولدي من صغره قد تولع بحب أخته و كنت أنجاه عن ذلك و أقول في نفسي
" هو لاي صغار". فلما كبروا وقع بينهم القبيح و سمعت بذلك فلم أصدق نفسي و مسكته و جزرته جزراً
بليغاً". (كتاب ألف ليلة و ليلة، ص: ١٥٣).

In Lane's words:

"O son of my brother, he replied, my son was, from his early days, *in love with this low-born woman* and I straitly forbade him to *entertain this passion*, hoping that, as years passed by, and he grew older, he would forget her"

(Lane: 52, italics mine).

Burton translates thus:

"Answered he, 'O son of my brother, this youth from his boyhood was *madly in love with his sister*, and often I forbade him from her, saying to myself 'They are but little ones'. However, when they grew up, sin befell between them."
(Burton, vol. I: 110-111, italics mine).

Lane omits the reference to the incestuous relationship between the brother and his sister. The man in his translation fell in love with a "low-born woman", not with "أخته" as in the Arabic text. "Low-born" has several implications, without specifying the brother-sister family relationship. A "low-born" woman is a much generalized and broader term, and expresses Lane's moral watchdog judgement of the character.

He preserves politeness by giving a hint that the woman is immoral, without going into details. He profits in the following ways: he gets credit for being tactful, non-coercive, and avoids responsibility for the potentially face-damaging interpretations. Also, he expresses concern for the reader. In all, he avoids the responsibility that on-record strategies entail, and avoids imposing the FTA (the incestuous relationship) on the reader. The more effort Lane spends in face-maintaining behaviour, the more he communicates his sincere desire that the reader's face wants be satisfied. There are at least two motivations for Lane's politeness mechanisms. He stresses his membership in the readers' society (Victorian), and alienates himself from the "perverted" Eastern sexual practices.

Burton's on-record negative politeness has a fair list of payoffs. Although he mentions that the "brother" was in love with the sister, he knows that this cannot be accepted in his society. Publishing the *Nights* only for subscribers shows his desire that his readers' face be maintained. Burton gets credit for honesty, and for indicating that he cares for the readers' judgement. He gets credit for his outspokenness, while avoiding the danger of being seen as a manipulator, or being misunderstood. Burton does not seem to conform to conventional expectations of politeness. For him, conventions can themselves be overwhelming reasons for doing FTAs. He uses the *Nights* as a pretext to capitalize on,

and embroider sexual elements, as he recognized the fact that, for the European reader, the East has always been mysterious.

The politeness patterns in the *Nights* are influenced by the tendency to judge the Oriental Other according to European norms and values. The symbolic field of cultural baggage (Kabbani, 1983:26) mediates the translators' vision. This kind of 'cultural baggage' impacts on the politeness representation. Orientalism greatly affects the politeness strategies of both Lane and Burton, since their translations address the European readership. All translation norms – faithful, free, word-for-word, sense-for-sense, foreignizing, and domesticating – are powered primarily by the taboo, secondarily by politeness norms. In terms of Schleiermacher's theory, Lane and Burton, as Victorian travellers and orientalist, have to choose between two methods. One is domesticating, an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the translator back home. The other is a foreignizing method, registering the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad. Both methods dictate a reconstitution of the morality and politeness system in the target text (TT) as the story of 'The Porter and the Ladies of Baghdad' shows:

”و لا زالوا في شرب و أخذ ملآن و رد فارغ، و الحمال بينهم قد انخلع و انطبع و رقص و انشكع و غنى البلاليق و الموشحات و صار معهم في بوس و هراش و عض و فرك و حس و لمس و خراع، و هذه تلقمه و هذه تكلمه و هذه تخدمه و ما زالوا كذلك حتى سكروا و لعبت الخمرة في عقولهم. فقامت البوابة إلى البحرة و تجردت من ثيابها و بقيت عريانة زلط و أرخت شعرها عليها. . . بلغني أن الصبية

البوابة لما غطست في البحرة و تغسلت و لعبت و قعدت في حجر الحمال و قالت له سيدي، حبيبي،
 ايش هو هذه. قال رحمك. قالت واه واه، ما تستحي، و نزلت في رقبته. قال فرجك. و الأخرى صرخت
 و قالت وه قبيح. قال كسكى. و الأخرى لكمته في صدره لكمة أقلبته و قالت يوه استحي. قال زنيورك.
 فضربته العريانة و قالت لا. قال هنكي، دندولكي، و دنييكتكي. قالت لا. لا. قال يا أخي ما اسمه. قالت
 اسمه حبك الجسور. . . بلغني أيها الملك أن الحمال لما طلع من البحرة تلقح في حجر المليحة و أرمى
 أدرعته في حجر البوابة و رجله و سيقانه في حجر الحوشكاشة و قال يا ستاه ايش هذه، و أومى إلى
 أيره. فقالت الواحدة زبك. فقال ما تستحوا، قبيح. قالت الأخرى زيرتك. قال لا. لا. قالوا شيك، خصوك،
محشك. قال لا. لا. لا. و هو باس هذه و خرطم هذه و قرص هذه و عض دي و قطع على دي. و قالوا
 له يا أخونا ما اسمه". (ألف ليلة و ليلة، ص: ١٥٣-١٥٢).

Lane translates the tale this way:

"The wine continued to circulate among them, and the porter, taking his part in the revels, *dancing and singing* with them, and enjoying the fragrant odours, began to *hug and kiss* them till at length, wine made sport with their reason; and *threw off all restraint*, indulging their merriment with as much freedom as if no man had been present. So they said to him, thou shalt pass the night with us on this condition, that thou submit to our authority, and ask not an explanation of anything that thou shalt see. Rise then, said they, and read *what is inscribed upon the door*. Accordingly, he went to the door, and found the following inscription upon it in letters of gold, '*Speak not of that which doth not concern thee, lest thou hear that which will not please thee*' and he said, "Bear witness to my promise that I will not speak of that which doth not concern me"

(Lane: 43, italics mine).

Burton offers an almost word-for-word translation:

"All this time the Porter was carrying on with them, *kissing, toying, biting, handling, groping, fingering*; whilst one thrust a dainty morsel in his mouth, and another slapped him; and this *cuffed his cheeks*, and threw sweet flowers at him; and he was in the paradise of pleasure. They ceased not doing after this fashion until the wine played tricks in their heads and worsened their wits; and when the drink got the better of them, the portress stood up and *doffed her clothes till she was mother-naked*. Then she came out of the cistern and throwing herself on the porter's lap said, 'O my lord, O my love, what callest

thou *this article*? Pointing to her slit, her solution of continuity. 'I call that thy cleft,' quoth the Porter, and she rejoined, 'Wah! Wah! Art thou not ashamed to use such a word?' And she caught him again by the collar and soundly cuffed him. Said he again, '*thy womb, thy vulva,*' and she struck him again a second slap crying, 'O Fie, O Fie, this is another ugly word; is there no shame in thee?' 'Quoth he, "*Thy coynte*;" and she cried, "O thou! O thou! Art wholly destitute of modesty? and thumped him and bashed. Then the porter said, '*Thy clitoris,*' whereas the eldest lady came down upon him with a yet sorer beating. Then he came out and threw himself into the first lady's lap and rested his arm upon the lap of the portress, and reposed his legs in the lap of the cateress and pointed to his *pickle* and said, 'O my mistresses, what is the name of this article and one said, 'Thy *pintle*!' But he replied, 'No' and gave each of them a bite by way of forfeit. Then said they, 'Thy *pizzle*!' but he cried 'No,' and gave each of them a hug until his heart was satisfied"

(Burton, vol. I: 89-93, italics mine).

References to body parts are an FTA according to politeness rules and a taboo topic in Victorian society. Lane translates "زنبر، كس، أير، رحم" into "throw off all restraint." Also, he avoids mentioning the body parts in his translation by changing the narrative. He rewrites the incident, although he sacrifices the focal point of the episode. "Speak not of that which doth not concern thee, lest thou hear that which will not please thee" seems ambiguous to readers. There is no motive that directs the characters' actions. Lane changes the episode from a sexual incident into some secret that the porter promises to keep. He comes up with "the inscription on the door" as a way to preserve politeness.

Lane's omission of details and changing of the mode of politeness reveals one aspect of the oppression of women in Victorian society:

expectations of appropriate behaviour that constrain women's ability to express themselves. Lane shows that the women of the incident were impolite because they "threw off all restraint, indulging their merriment with as much freedom as if no man had been present."

Lane shows that the women in the Victorian era were supposed to uphold social conventions because they were the repositories of tact, knowing the right things to say to other people. Men and women were expected to have different interests and roles, hold different types of conversations, and react differently to other people. Women's speech differed from men's in that it was more polite, women being the preservers of morality and civility. As Lakoff (1975) explains, when the rules of politeness are fully and correctly formulated, they should be able to predict why, in a particular culture, a particular act is or is not polite. According to Lakoff's analysis of women's politeness, colloquial language and dirty words do not distinguish women's speech. Lakoff's rules of politeness apply to Victorian women, being formal and deferential, which implies being distant and passive.

Burton opts for a different strategy, and translates the FTA faithfully. He translates "بوس", "هراش", "عض", "فرك", "حس", and "لمس", as "kissing", "toying", "biting", "handling", "groping", and "fingering" respectively. He comes close to a kind of word for word translation, translating faithfully the names of the female sex organs in the ST. He

translates “كس”, “زنبور”, “رحم” and “فرج” as “coynte”, “clitoris”, “womb”, “vulva.” The same applies for the masculine sexual organ when he translates “أير” and “زب” as “pintle” and “pizzle”. Burton, although patriarchal in his general views of Eastern and European women, projects another FTA against Victorian society. He is overstating the impolite actions and infringing on politeness rules. Is translating women’s violation of politeness rules an FTA? It is one of the reasons why Lane omitted references to sexual organs. Burton’s word-for-word translation has other personal and social motivations.

Lane’s domesticating method depends on reconstructing politeness relations according to domestic cultural values. The eccentricities of Oriental life, with its perverse morality are reduced when they appear as a series of detailed items presented in a normative European style. His translation reveals the inscription of the British culture. Domestication involves rewriting the foreign text according to English values; whatever difference the translation conveys is imprinted by the target-culture values. The domesticating process bypasses details that might, by their unseemliness, offend readers.

Prudery marks many of Lane’s anecdotes, describing a mode of behaviour that he wishes to ascribe to the East. For him, the East is full of strange apparitions, some too erotic to be evoked in language. The Easterners have moral shortcomings; his job is to correct, redefine them,

and make them more polite. Lane's translation smoothes out erotic features of the Arabic text to insure moral adequacy. His translation masks the cultural differences between the foreign text and the English culture. He inscribes a reading that reflects English literary canons and respects bourgeois moral values. His goal is to write to the popular taste, to the privileged Victorian social elite as examples of the most advanced stage of human development. Lane's response to cultural differences is to repress them, bowing to the dominant societal traditions, and empowering an academic elite to maintain them. He changes the description of women in the *Nights* to approximate that of women in repressively patriarchal societies. Lane's domesticating policy dissolves differences and disguises his subjective assessment of the ST. The 'persona' who translates appropriately and acceptably is not only a person driven by emotional and intellectual motives and needs, but also a social instrument wielded by the society in order to regulate translation ideologically. The translator's persona is a public mask, designed, constructed and maintained in order to control the readers' approach to the TT. Lane seeks to bring a version of the SL into the TL, with extreme views on the lowliness of the SL text. This reflects a patronizing attitude that demonstrates a form of elitism, as Lane perceived the ST on a lower cultural level.

Although Lane and Burton had different personalities, they did share the same attitudes and biases. Lane believed that the behaviour of

Eastern women was unique; it had no equivalent in the West. What Burton felt himself unable to say about European women, he could unabashedly say about Eastern ones. They were there for the articulation of sex.

Burton's translation is foreignizing: it re-orientalizes the Orient. He also re-establishes the politeness relations differently. Foreignizing, or 'defamiliarization' is a common practice when translating exotic texts. This strategy of foreignization is "motivated by an ethics of difference and thus alters the reproduction of dominant domestic ideologies and institutions that provide a partial representation of foreign cultures" (Venuti, 1998, 83). Their semiotic character is regulated by the differences sought in order to distinguish the text from other texts, or translations from others, in this case. Therefore, Burton orientalizes the 'oriental text,' exoticises a text already considered exotic to mark his individuality. His translation seeks to preserve the exotic qualities of the text – those which make the text – but this preservation is a rewriting. The translation is modulated according to the function that Burton wants to perform in the target language and culture. He constructs his desired image of the Arabs, of their culture and even language, which he wanted them to have, to adhere to the expected image of the Orient.

Burton associates the Orient with sex. The East is a place where inhibitions and social obligations can be shed. His personality exhibits his

dual nature: the East is a place of freedom from Victorian moral authority, where he acts as an agent for imperial power. His translation reveals a consciousness negotiating its way through an alien culture by virtue of having successfully absorbed its systems of information and behaviour. Everything is presented by means of his knowledge and interventions. His depictions of the women of the *Nights* articulate his own sexual preoccupations.

Leech's (1983) discussion of the politeness issue as an interaction between Grice's Cooperation Principle (CP) and his Politeness Principle (PP) helps clarify the politeness norms shown in the next passage. As translators are required to tell the truth as a moral imperative, departures from Leech's maxims help explain how translators sometimes translate more than they should. PP consists of a set of maxims that accord with Grice's terminology. Co-operation and politeness regulate the written material.

CP regulates what we say so that it contributes to some social goal. It could be argued, however, that PP has a high regulative role, which is to maintain social equilibrium and friendly relations enabling readers to assume that the translator is being co-operative. But there are situations where PP can overrule CP to the extent that even the maxim of Quality (which tends to outweigh other co-operative maxims) is sacrificed. Not translating faithfully can be considered as not telling the truth. This can

explain the difference in the truth-value between off-record and on-record politeness. In being polite, Lane is often faced with a clash between CP and PP and has to choose how far to trade off one against the other. People typically use 'polite' in a relative sense: that is, relative to some norm of behaviour in a particular setting they regard as typical. The norm may be that of a particular culture or language community. The maxims of Quality and Quantity frequently work in competition with one another. In this case, the amount of information the translator gives is limited by his desire to tell the truth. In Lane's case, in terms of Quality/Quantity and PP, if PP entails Q and Q does not entail PP, then PP is stronger than Q.

One of the main purposes of my discussion of politeness is to find out how both translators exploit the maxims differently. In the translation of homosexuality in the story of "Prince Kamar Al- Zaman," Lane gives PP a higher rating than CP, whereas Burton does the opposite:

"و قمر الزمان كل يوم يزداد في الحسن و الجمال حتى أخرج عقول الخلق. فصبر عليه لمدة سنة و قد كمل في الفصاحة و تهتك عليه العوالم، فهو فتنة العشاق و روضة المشتاق، عذب الكلام يخجل البدر التمام، يميل من الدلال كغصن البان أو قضيب الخيزران و تنوب خديه عن الورد الشمايل كما قال الشاعر :

و كلهم أصبحوا رعاياه	هذا ملك الملاح قاطبة
كل الورى في جماله تاه	مكمل الجمال منفرداً
(كتاب ألف ليلة و ليلة، ص: ٥٣٥).	

Lane translates thus:

"Meanwhile, Kamar Ez-Zaman increased every day in beauty and comeliness, and in elegance and tenderness of manner. The king shah Zaman bore with

him patiently for a year, until he became perfect in eloquence and grace: *mankind were ravished by his beauty*, and every zephyr that blew wafted the praises of his loveliness: he became a *temptation unto lovers, and as a paradise to the desires*; sweet in his speech, his face put to shame the full moon; he was endowed with justness of stature and form, and with graceful engaging manners.”

(Lane: 190-235, italics mine).

Burton is more specific:

“All this, and Kamar al-Zaman increased daily in beauty and loveliness and amorous grace; and the king bore with him for a whole year till he became perfect in eloquence and elegant wit. *All men were ravished with his charms*, and every breeze that blew bore the tidings of his gracious favour; his fair sight was a seduction to the loving and a garden of delight to the longing. He was, in fine the pink of perfection, even as the poet hath said of him:

All charms are congregate in him alone

And deals his loveliness to man unrest.”

(Burton, vol. III: 214-215, 301-307, italics mine).

Lane is closer to the ST when he translates “و تهتكت عليه العوالم” as “all *mankind* were ravished with his beauty.” “Mankind” refers to all people, men and women. Burton deviates from the ST, offering his own understanding that “All *men* were ravished with his charms.” This is a reference to homosexuality. Although the physical description of Kamar al-Zaman in both the original and in Lane’s translation is more suitable for a woman, there are no homosexual hints. Lane feels the need to uphold PP, which can be generally formulated as: minimize the expression of impolite beliefs (homosexuality), or maximize the expression of polite beliefs. Polite and impolite beliefs are, respectively,

beliefs that are favourable and unfavourable to the reader, where 'favourable' and 'unfavourable' are measured on a relevant scale of value

Unlike Lane, Burton offers his translation by means of his interventions. Burton is more informative, but at the cost of being more impolite to the reader. Homosexuality is not referred to directly in the original, so Burton alters as well as translates, the episode turning "All men ravished by his charms" and "deals his loveliness to man unrest" into homosexual references. Because Burton does not translate the episode as given in the original, he is not faithful to the ST.

Translators get a wider readership if their translations are in line with standards for acceptable behaviour in the target culture, (i.e. cultural ideology). Since the manners of the target culture are considered superior to those of the source culture, the bad manners should not be allowed to influence the good ones. Both Lane and Burton may have felt justified in exercising selective faithfulness. Lane gave more attention to the incidents of the tales than to the manners of the people, and wanted to appear "truthful." His preservation of politeness in his translation insured his 'invisibility,' (Venuti, 1995) as opposed to Burton, who was 'there' by means of interventions.

What matters for Lane is that his translation seems accurate, general and dispassionate, convincing the English reader that he is not infected with heresy. His control is established through the manipulation

of narrative voice, through his use of details. He selects and assembles information to reconstruct a picture of the East that conforms to the Victorian understanding of what the Orient is meant to be. His individuality as a creative presence disappears completely. The subordination of Lane's ego to scholarly authority corresponds to the increased specialization of knowledge about the East represented by British society. A part of fluent discourse is to reproduce the text, changing politeness formulas, as part of domesticating Eastern knowledge. This includes filtering the text through regulating codes, editions, commentaries, grammars and translations. Lane's translation is tailored to the target culture exclusively, screening out whatever seems inappropriate.

Politeness in translation is related to Venuti's 'translators' invisibility.' According to Venuti (1995), most publishers and readers judge a translated text acceptable when it reads fluently. The translation is fluent when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writers' personality or intention, or the essential meaning of the foreign text – the appearance that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the 'original.' The illusion of transparency is an effect of fluent discourse, of the translator's efforts to insure easy readability by adhering to current usage, maintaining syntax and fixing a precise meaning. The illusory

effect conceals the numerous conditions under which the translation is made, starting with the translator's crucial entrance into the foreign text. The more fluent the translation, the more invisible the translator, as exemplified by Lane's translation. An illusion is produced by fluent translating when the translator's invisibility masks the domestication of foreign texts.

The more visible translator is exemplified by the individualistic conception of authorship that characterizes Burton's material. Burton fails to hide his ego and personality, and intervenes with details that prevent smooth transitions. He has a sexual curiosity that pushes him to research the perversions of various races. He represents the age's fantasies fully and openly; he represents a threat to the cautious institutions.

Two maxims of Leech's politeness principle help explain Burton's translation policy. The first is the "Interest Principle", which states that a discourse is interesting by having unpredictability or news value, which is preferred to a discourse which is predictable and boring. But, Burton's mistake is that he uses overstatement and exaggeration so frequently that the reader adjusts his interpretation, and they lose their interest value and become predictable.

There are also cases when Burton goes baldly on record, while Lane does not translate the FTA at all. Lane opts not to translate the

following tale, 'the king's daughter and the ape', as it is unsuitable for any sort of adjustment. Burton uses the tale to show his extensive knowledge of anthropology and sexual diseases:

”يحكى أيضاً أنه كان لبعض السلاطين أبنه و تعلق قلبها بحب عبد أسود فاقتض بكارتها و أولعت بالنكاح فكانت لا تصبر عنه ساعة واحدة فكشفت أمرها إلى بعض القهرمانات فأخبرتها أنه لا شيء ينكح أكثر من القرد. . . ثم أمرتني بنكاح الصبية فنكتها إلى أن أغشي عليها فحملتها العجوز و ألقت فرجها على فم القدر حتى دخل فرجها فنزل منه شيء فتأملته فإذا هو دودتان أحدهما سوداء و الأخرى صفراء. فقالت العجوز: الأولى تربت من نكاح العبد و الثانية من نكاح القرد.”
(ألف ليلة و ليلة، الجزء الثاني، ص: ٢٥٢)

Burton translates thus:

“There was once a Sultan's daughter, whose heart was taken with the love of a black slave: He abated her maidenhood and she became passionately addicted to futtering . . . She complained of her case to one of her body women, who told her that *nothing poketh and stroketh more abundantly than the baboon*. Then she bade me futter the girl, and I futtered her till she fainted away, when the old woman took up and set her parts to a mouth of the cooking pot. The steam of the pot entered her slit and then fell from it somewhat, which I examined, and behold, it was two small worms, one black and another yellow. Quoth the old woman, “*The black was bred by the strokings of the Negro and the yellow of the strokings of the baboon.*”

(Burton: 297-298, italics mine).

The copulation with animals is a serious FTA against Victorian virtue. Burton manages to preserve face by giving the Victorians access to knowledge about other nations. The other nations are not on the same moral level as the European nations. Burton wants to prove that, as a scholar, he has a better knowledge of the practices of the East.

Looking back at Burton's personal background as a translator, we know that he was always seeking recognition as a scholar in areas like

geography, Indian brothels, falconry, and mining techniques. Also, he set up the Kama Shastra Society with John Arbuthnot, initially to publish classics of Indian erotica. The society had already published the Kama Sutra and Ananga Ranga. Burton employed a subscription society both to raise money and to diminish the risk of being prosecuted for obscenity. Burton used the *Nights* to express himself, and made it an occasion for documenting all manner of sexual deviation, congress with animals, sexual mutilation, and castration. His notes throw light on the evolution of Victorian anthropology, reflecting many of its prime preoccupations. Burton considered himself to be an anthropologist (he was a member of the Royal Anthropological Society), and wrote in the jargon of the profession. Burton shared his culture's belief that black men were creatures of instinct, controlled by sexual passions, and incapable of the refinement to which the white races had evolved. The blacks were supposed to have an enormous sexual appetite. The Victorians could appreciate the grotesque caricatures of blacks and other minorities in the stories without feeling that such gross racial affront was the fruit of their own 'civilised' culture.

Burton concentrated on the *Nights* because it had erotic appeal. He went far in confirming the idea that the Easterners were highly skilled in sexual matters. "Eastern wisdom" consisted of sexual wisdom. Although he was well versed in Arab and Indian cultures, although he had culled a

vast store of knowledge from his Eastern travels, Burton chose to present the sum of his experience in one specific mode. He had fantasies about the sexual powers of black men and their lusting after Arab women. Burton's "Terminal Essay" is a testimony to his extensive knowledge of Eastern sexual practices. He wanted to expand his personality and show his knowledge; the final impression left is that the *Nights* is about Burton. Through his voluminous translation, he created a repository for the anthropological notes he had been gathering for years and saw no means of being published otherwise. He was polite in that he presented anthropological observations. His impoliteness came from his racial attitude toward blacks, and his references to sexual diseases.

6. Conclusion

This discussion shows how translation incorporated into politeness models can be shaped by the socio-political and ideological structures of the TL. The Victorian translator's ideology of the TL, his "personal set of values and attitudes" (Lefevere, 1995: 41), imposes constraints, prohibitions, or orthodoxies on the translation process. Driven by Victorian ideological motivations, translators sanctioned sexuality in the *Nights* and stereotyped the East as decadent and immoral. The TT represents a manipulation of the ST for a certain purpose (Herman, 1985: 11), a purpose often linked to ideology. I tried to establish a comparative

textual analysis detecting the manipulative strategies used to reconstruct a more 'polite' TT. By doing so, I explored the applicability of linguistic politeness modes in the study of translation strategies in existing translations. I used the existing politeness methodologies and approaches to explain linguistically how positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record strategies were manipulated and given different values in the TT.

The Victorian translators performed personal and ideological interventions at specific points in the ST. This involved choosing acceptable diction, toning down language referring to sexual parts and bodily functions, using euphemisms, and archaizing the taboo words or not translating them. They also deleted culture and language-specific items, and included semantically distant equivalents, jeopardizing the coherence of the TT. Interventions to add and clarify in order to compensate for the loss of the ST rhetoric appear to be more rewriting than translation.

Victorian translators were participants in a cultural-intellectual milieu and their politeness choices must be set within this context. Power relations between the SL and TL worlds affected handling of politeness issues and of translation generally. The impact of the taboo has been 'flattened' in the process of compliance with the TL norms and ideologies. Thus, Venuti (1995, 1998) has argued that 'fluent' translations

are ideologically suspect because the process involves repression of the differences. Translations were used to endorse the morality of the TL, where power politics and cultural politics played an important role in defining what was proper. Along with the ideological, there is the translator's personal agenda, to 'domesticate' or to 'foreignize', to identify with or to distance himself from the ST culture and ideology. As translation can be defined in terms of a transfer between the cultural 'Self' and 'Other,' some translators of the *Nights* were caught up in the cultural appropriation of the Other, and therefore, in political dependencies. Editing the taboo in the *Nights* can be viewed as an ethnocentric mode of cultural representation of the TT culture and an attempt to canonize the ST in order to be approved by the institutions of the Empire. The Victorian translator acted as a narrator of the events of the ST, a 'purifier' of the Eastern indecencies, and a defender of Victorian supremacy. Translation turned into a corrective procedure to facilitate the transmission of values from 'low' to 'high' literature. The translator assumed the role of a 'gentleman' (whatever meaning this term had in the Victorian social and cultural setting).

Now we move from the ideological constraints on the translation of politeness of texts to the ones imposed by the universe of discourse (Lefevere, 1995: 87). The next chapter will deal with how politeness relations are affected by the subject matter of the ST, and the role of

patronage and publishing houses in setting the criterion of 'good behaviour' in translated texts.

A Trial of the Arabic Translation of *Lady Chatterly's Lover*

A Trial of the Arabic Translation of *Lady Chatterly's Lover*

This chapter discusses how the Syrian translator Hana Abboud, in his Arabic translation of D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterly's Lover* (1995), employs politeness strategies to make the source text (ST) more acceptable to the target-language reader. Studying Abboud's translation reveals how the use of a specific linguistic form in the target text (TT) can be considered a major strategy, which can be analyzed in the light of different politeness theories. Studying the politeness of the TT can help us understand how the language system in the TT imposes certain politeness norms and choices. This means that the politeness strategies which determine appropriate behaviour in the TT are connected with the target language and culture. Retention of the target reader's cooperation dictates that the strategy meets the target reader's expectation of what is acceptable. Whether the use of politeness strategies is motivated by the translator's concern for the reader's face-loss or by his concern for abiding by Grice's CP, the orientation is the same: the linguistic form is determined by the translator's sense of responsibility towards the reader.

This study will show how Abboud's use of standard Arabic helps achieve some of the politeness lacking in the ST. Since studying politeness in the translation relates to the translator's choice of politeness strategy, form, and locution, this analysis of politeness is more pragmatic than socio-linguistic. Politeness in translation becomes pragmatic proper only when it is seen as the strategic employment of a given form to achieve the translator's goal. The translator can establish a dialogue with the reader, anticipating his/her reaction and building it into the text.

The goal of this study is to bring together politeness and translation by presenting a model of contextual translation analysis to demonstrate how House's 'politeness equivalence' (1997) can be achieved. The translation of any text is doubly bound: on the one hand, to the ST, and on the other hand, to the communicative linguistic conditions in the readers' culture. According to House, the most important requirement of translation is that its politeness be equivalent to that of the original. This 'functional equivalence' can be evaluated by referring the original and the translation to both external and internal contextual factors. A close examination of the Arabic translation reveals whether the politeness exhibited in the ST is carried over into the TT.

As we have discussed before, Lefevere (1992) has suggested a number of constraints that control the translator's decision-making process. Of particular importance to the discussion of this chapter is the 'constraint of the universe of discourse' to determine the way translators manipulate literary texts. According to Lefevere (ibid: 87), the constraint of the universe of discourse "refers to the subject matter of the source text, the objects, customs and beliefs it describes." This constraint has to do with the expectancy norms of the target readers (what they will deem an acceptable subject matter), and with the accountability norm of the translator and his translation ethics. Making improvements on the politeness level, as we will see, will reveal the translator's TT bias, as he shows a higher loyalty to the reader than to the ST itself, and to the author's words more than his intentions. The norms to which the translator will seek to conform (or which he is required to conform) set under obligations to act within a certain range of acceptable behaviour. The translator's politeness options will be influenced by the ST and its context, his knowledge of the translation commission, the potential readership, his linguistic knowledge, his awareness of the cultural and political climate at the time of the translation, and the influence exerted over his choices by the publishers. Having defined translation as a form of re-writing, Bassnett and Levefere (1992: vii) added

that this “rewriting is manipulation, undertaken in the service of power.” The activity of translation enables us to measure the degree to which the institutional framework can succeed in frustrating the designs and the intentions of the author of the creative text.

The following will be a close look at Abboud’s pragmatic strategies; those which have to do with the selection of politeness norms and information in the TT, a selection that is governed by his knowledge of the prospective readership. As syntactic and semantic changes manipulate form and meaning respectively, pragmatic changes affect the message of the TT. His pragmatic strategies on the level of politeness include: cultural filtering, explicitness, interpersonal and illocutionary changes. Passages from the novel will be examined to illustrate how this has been done.

Politeness and Translation: Strategic Language Use

1. Brown and Levinson’s face-saving view

As we have seen in the previous chapter, Brown and Levinson (1978) propose a linguistic theory, following Goffman’s views (1972) on politeness, in which the concept of ‘face’ is central . Brown and Levinson assume that “all competent adult members of a society have (and know each other to have) ‘face,’” which they define as “the public self-image that every

member wants to claim for himself” (1978: 66). Since face is so sensitive, it is mutually beneficial for participants in interactions to try to maintain each other’s face. This is also reflected in Goffman’s claim that the motivation to preserve the participant’s face underlies the preservation of orderly communication (1972: 323). For him, “Participants need not be concerned so much with finding ways of expressing themselves as with ensuring that the extensive resources by which interactions are expressed do not convey unintended or improper messages.” (1981: 19). The notion of face, consisting of approval and non-imposition, seems to account for the politeness phenomena and explain some of the differences between cultures. Notions of face are closely related to some of “the most fundamental cultural ideas about the nature of the social persona, honour and virtue, shame and redemption and thus to religious concepts” (Brown and Levinson: 13). Brown and Levinson claim that all members of society have also rational capacities that enable them to select from a set of strategies to avoid or minimize FTAs.

Ide (1989: 225) defines politeness as “language usage associated with smooth communication” achieved through the translator’s strategies and expressions conforming to prescribed norms. As Hudson (1980: 115) contends, “most people want to present the world an image of

considerateness, because this is the most likely to make them popular.” He adds “we usually try to avoid exposing other people’s weaknesses, or raising heated controversy, unless we are sure that it will not affect the attitude of others towards us or we are indifferent to their opinions.” What form this consideration will take and to whom it will be addressed depends on the cultural background of the participants, that is, their shared and expected norms of behaviour. Each society agrees that certain behaviours are appropriate, and for this reason such patterns of politeness are successful in societies that support them. Thus, “rules of conduct impinge upon the individual in two ways: directly, as obligations, establishing how he is morally constrained to conduct himself; indirectly, as expectations, establishing how others are morally bound to act in regard to him” (Goffman, 1956: 473-4). These shared expectations constitute part of the socio-cultural knowledge of the interactants, and include both intentional strategies and the more fixed social indices. Such knowledge and its employment usually guarantee harmonious interpersonal relations, except when impoliteness is the speaker’s intention.

Janney’s framework systems of ‘social politeness’ (1988) seem to represent culturally coloured interpretations of the basic notion of tact (face-concerns) as conventionalized in any given culture. Politeness is viewed as

the intentional, strategic behaviour of the individual in order to satisfy the face concerns of self and other in case of threat via positive or negative styles of redress. Deviations from the cultural norms arouse attention. Thus non-fulfillment of a given politeness rule carries with it two potential social risks. The first risk is that of being judged as lacking in social manners, or, more extremely, of being ascribed negative personality traits. The second risk is derived from the power of politeness to invite 'conversational implicatures' (Grice). Deviance from 'normal politeness' might invite such implicatures, because it might deviate from culturally conventionalized modes of expression.

Linking politeness with social appropriateness, self-constraint, deference and consideration reveals an awareness of face-concerns and social harmony. While expression of face-concerns is readily acknowledged, the nature of these concerns and the appropriate ways to redress them in different situations are culturally specific. Cultural differences are revealed in the linguistic details of the face-redressive strategies preferred in society. A fundamental difference between politeness strategies can be explained in terms of differences in the significance attached to the two expectations of face. The English seem to place a higher value on privacy and individuality, the negative aspects of face, whereas the Arabs seem to emphasize

involvement and in-group relations, the positive aspects. An adequate account of politeness in translation should consider the nature and quality of relationships, and the values predominant in the target culture. The target culture readership plays a determining role in what constitutes an acceptable translation. To be successful, the translator should realize that the target culture's norms and values should motivate selection from the ST language forms.

Lawrence's *Lady Chatterly's Lover* caused heated controversy in the 1960^s. The novel was judged to be composed of the material of outrage, and was largely received as 'impolite,' as it incurred damage to both negative and positive face. It defies the ethical connotations of politeness. The theme of the novel is an FTA in itself, the sexual act. In my correspondence with Abboud (June 8, 2004), he indicated that he read Lawrence's literature, and that he was driven to translate *Lady Chatterly's Lover* out of his admiration for the author. He hoped to shed more light on Lawrence's legacy as a prominent literary figure. It's Abboud's only translation of Lawrence's novels; his other translations include *The Divine Comedy* by Dante and books on literary criticism and Greek mythology. There were already enough Egyptian translations of Lawrence's other works like *Sons and Lovers* and *Women in Love*, but not *Lady Chatterly's Lover*.

Abboud wanted to cater to the need of the reading public in the target culture, as he was dissatisfied with the only available “inadequate” and “concise” Lebanese translation of *Lady Chatterly’s Lover* in the Syrian market. The TT readers include students of English literature studying in the English departments at Syrian universities, intellectual elite, the general public who are familiar with the author’s other works, and those who enjoy simply enjoy reading of world literature. Abboud has faced the challenge of translating the FTA into Arabic language and culture, while protecting his and the TT reader’s face. The translator’s face can be his most personal possession; and “the centre of his security and pleasure, it is only on loan to him from society: it will be withdrawn unless he conducts himself in a way that is worthy of it” (Goffman, 1972: 322).

Consider what Brown and Levinson say about the Model Person (MP) as characterized by the translator’s role in redressing FTA’s in the ST. If Abboud is an MP, a rational agent, he will anticipate that his translation - if expressed literally- will threaten the reader’s face. Therefore, he will modify the text, using politeness as a means of mitigating such FTAs. Abboud has the multi-task of determining both the face threat of the FTA and to what extent to minimize the face loss of the FTA. He will then choose a strategy that provides the desired degree of face saving. The polite translation is thus

a compromise between saying as much as possible of what the ST author intended in the ST and avoiding the risk of social conflict.

Abboud adopts the negative politeness strategies to minimize the FTA. The author does not have the ST readers' face in mind, while the translator's focus is to save the TT readers' face, because they belong to a different culture. The translator is repairing the face damage that the writer caused. 'Face redress' is a powerful pressure on any linguistic system, and this pressure affects language structure. There is a correlation between the levels and kinds of face redress in a culture and lexical devices for achieving that redress. 'Impersonalization' can be considered a negative politeness tactic to minimize the impact of the FTA. One way of achieving impersonalization is the use of standard Arabic when translating the Derbyshire dialect in the ST. By adhering to Standard Arabic, the translator is protecting his face and the Arab reader's face, and distancing himself and the Arab reader from the FTA, as the following passage shows:

"Th'art good *cunt*, aren't ter? Best bit *o'cunt* left on earth. When ter likes! When tha'rt willin'!"

'What is *cunt*? she said.

'An doesn't ter know? *Cunt*! It's thee down theer, an' what I get when I'm inside thee, and what tha gets when I'm I'side thee; it's a' as it is, all on't.'

'An on't,' she teased. '*Cunt*! It's like *fuck* then.'

'Nay nay! *Fuck's* only what you do. Animals *fuck*. But cunt's a lot more than that. It's thee, dost see: an' tha'rt a lot besides an animal, aren't ter?- even ter *fuck*? Cunt! Eh, that's the beauty o'thee, lass!'"

(Lady Chatterly's Lover, 1961: 185, italics Mine).

Abboud translates this passage into Arabic as follows

"إنك تملكين أعظم فرج . أليس كذلك ؟ أعظم فرج في الأرض ، فتعالى متى ترغبين " .
قالت: "و ما هو الفرج؟".
"آه، ألا تعلمين؟ الفرج، إنه في الأسفل هناك. هو ما أحصل عليه عندما أدخل فيك. و ما تحصلين عليه عندما أكون فيك – و ذكوشي" (و هذا كل شيء).
اغتاظت " ذكوشي، الفرج. يشبه النكاح إذن".
"لا. النكاح هو ما تفعلين فقط. الحيوانات تقوم با لنكاح. لكن الفرج هو أكثر من ذلك. إنه أنت، انظري: أنت لا تشبهين الحيوان. أليس كذلك؟ حتى نكاحك هو الفرج. و هذا هو الجميل فيك يا حبيبتي". (عشيق السيدة شاترلييه، ص: ٢٦٦).

To illustrate the politeness differences between the ST and the TT, I will translate the Arabic back into English:

"You've got the best *vulva*, haven't you? The best *vulva* on earth, so come to me whenever you're willing'?"

'What is *vulva*?' she said.

"And don't you know? *Vulva*! It's down there. It's what I get when I'm inside you, and what you get when I'm inside you. It's and as it is (that's everything).

"That's everything' she teased. '*Vulva*! It's like *sexual intercourse* then.'

'No. *Sexual intercourse* is only what you do. Animals do *sexual intercourse*. But *vulva* is a lot more than that. It's you, see: you are a lot besides an animal. Aren't you? - even your *sexual intercourse*? *Vulva*! And that's the beauty in you, sweetheart."

(Back translation from Arabic, italics mine).

The back translation from Arabic shows that Abboud uses "الفرج" and "النكاح" to render "cunt" and "fuck" respectively. In politeness terms, the translator chooses neutral and impersonal constructions for English words.

The “four-letter” words in the ST are consistently rendered more precise and scientific in the TT. By using standard Arabic to translate the English colloquial, the translator is less involved. The words in the TT are considerably toned down and flattened in their perlocutionary force, and more sober and factual than in the ST.

The italicized words in the TT have a lesser perlocutionary force than their counterparts in the ST because the words in the ST and the TT belong to different registers. Register refers to “systematic variation in relation to social context” (Lyons, 1977: 584), the way in which “the language we speak or we write varies according to the type of situation” (Halliday, 1978: 32). Certain situations such as formal meetings or social relationships require more – formal language. This ‘formality’ may manifest itself in English by the choice of formal lexis and forms of address. Abboud has changed the register of the SL from intimate to formal in the TL. The choice of register has to do with the strategic use of language because the translator deliberately uses “polite forms” in order to change the situation.

Since Abboud aims at ‘politeness equivalence’, he changes the language and register, making TT distant from the original. The use of “cunt” and “fuck” are markers of “intimacy” and the two lovers do not have to worry about offending each other with such words. Using “الفرج” and “

النكاح” in the translation suggests negative politeness in the sense that it is specific and focused. Negative politeness minimizes particular imposition that the FTA causes.

In politeness terms, words referring to tabooed body parts and bodily functions (sex) are considered an FTA in the Arabic text. The words referring to the FTA in the Arabic translation are usually used in scientific, clinical and legal registers. Because of their rather scientific connotation, the ‘four-letter’ words in the Arabic translation do not shock the target reader to the same degree that they shock the English reader. Abboud reconstructs the politeness network in the translation by using the standard linguistic forms in the TT as a redressive strategy.

The use of any redressive strategy depends on the translator’s judging the size of the FTA on the basis of the dimensions of power (P), social distance (D) and rank of imposition (R). Applying these to translation, P stands for the power of the reader (H) over the translator (S), D for the social distance between both (H) and (S) and R for the extent to which the FTA is considered an imposition in the culture of (S) and (H). The choice of strategy is made on the basis of the translator’s assessment of the parameters of P, D, and R. The combined value of these factors can determine the overall ‘weightiness’ of the FTA, which in turn influences the strategy used.

Abboud is distancing himself from any face breach the FTA might cause to the Arab readers. By using “sexual intercourse” instead of “fuck”, Abboud is enhancing the value of D because standard Arabic is not usually used in intimate situations like lovemaking. The value of P is also high as the Arab reader has P over the translator if the latter wants to belong to Arabic society. Consequently, the R-value of translating a text of sexual nature is high, since D and P are high. Formality increases when the R-value increases and the choice of form and the choice to use it can be influenced by the R factor. The language used by the two lovers in the ST is intimate, suggesting low values of P, D, and R. The R value of the FTA is low in the ST, since sex talk is typical of love-making situations, and familiarity is necessary for the reception of the taboo. Comparing this to the TT, the use of the standard linguistic forms suggests formality and distance with high values accorded to P, D and R. Lovers or spouses in the Arab world would hardly use “النكاح” to describe their love-making or “الفرج” to refer to the female sex organ. Since the R-value is high in Arab society and culture, the translator handles the sexual act impersonally as a subject of his disinterested and objective inquiry, not as a personal matter that could pertain to the speaker or the reader.

The difference between the politeness network in the ST and the TT can be attributed, as Sachiko Ide (1987) argues, to the fact that the texts belong to different literary cultures. 'Volition', the individualistic strategic manipulation of language, characterizes Lawrence's mode of writing, as opposed to 'discernment,' or the translator's use of language.

The consequences of adopting a different politeness system from that of the ST are dramatic. As Abboud warms up to the use of standard linguistic forms, he shuns the extra work involved in the contextual reconstruction necessary for the perception of Lawrence's message. Through his use of the standard variety of Arabic, he fails to communicate crucial aspects of the ST meaning. The words "fuck," "cunt," and "cock" were used by Lawrence to shock the readers. With every repetition of the words, Lawrence hoped that they would be progressively purified as they were read. The goal of Lawrence's repetition of the sex words was to redeem them from their low and vulgar associations, something the translator fails to do. It is naïve assumption that a text popular in the SL, even if correctly translated, will be popular in translation. There are other factors, such as politeness systems, that can influence the reception of the text in the TL. The way Abboud translates the politeness issue shows how social functions can

set in motion the great mass of derivational machinery that determines the linguistic expression the FTA takes in the target culture.

When it comes to the translation of an FTA into Arabic, “polite texts” are interrelated with “morality”. In Arab society, ‘polite’ typically means ‘virtuous.’ The translator has to behave correctly, the way other members of the society expect him to behave. The above passage is a good example of how changing ‘politeness in the text’ can change the ‘politeness of the text’. Sturge (1997: 26) ascribes the role of unequal relationships between the ST and the TT to normalizing approaches which “smooth down the source text’s lumps and bumps in the process of normalization or accommodation to target language conventions,” when “precedence is given to target language expectations of the abnormality of the source language culture.” (ibid: 30). Here, the translator is resisting the introduction and ingraining of forms and values of the source language culture in the target language culture. Hatim and Mason (1997: 146) point out that “if a domesticating strategy is adopted in the case of translation from a culturally dominant source language to a minority-status target language, it may help to protect the latter against the tendency for it to absorb and thus to undermine the source language textual practice.” Nord (1994: 63) suggests that the production of normalized or domesticated target texts remains the recommended format for competent

translation, when it is a maximal approximation to a target language parallel text in terms of textual and communicative dimensions and imagery to create the illusion of transparency. But this does not imply the elimination of exotic or creative effects in the translation. Venuti (1995: 1) has identified fluency as the dominant convention of translation, suggesting that “a translated text, whether prose or poetry, fiction or non-fiction, is judged acceptable by most publishers and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities make it transparent.” As linguistic peculiarities are avoided, translation gets authorized and seems to move towards the TT reader and culture. As for Abboud, he seems to prefer using substitutive strategies that replaces taboo words of the ST with semantically distant equivalents, although this strategy interference with the overall coherence of the text and the portrayal of the characters remains open to debate.

2. The conversational-maxim view

As I mentioned in the introduction, Leech sees politeness as crucial in explaining “why people are often so indirect in conveying what they mean,” and (1983: 80) as a means of “rescuing the Cooperative Principle” in the sense that politeness can explain exceptions to and deviations from the CP. Leech’s politeness principle PP depicts absolute politeness as a scale having a negative and a positive pole. At the negative pole is negative politeness, minimizing the impoliteness of impolite illocutions. At the positive pole is positive politeness, maximizing the politeness of polite illocutions (Leech: 83-84). The scales of absolute politeness are cost-benefit, optionality, and indirectness (123).

The Arabic conception of politeness is to some extent moralized, making it appropriate to analyze politeness in Abboud’s translation in terms of Leech’s maxims. The translator depends on the PP and its maxims as a regulative procedure to ensure social harmony, and to counterbalance potential conflict caused by the translation of the FTA. Abboud’s choice, to render euphemisms literally and without any explanatory notes to the target reader, is a violation of Grice’s CP, but can be explained by Leech’s PP maxims. As the following passage shows, euphemisms have been used as ‘minimizers’ (to reduce the implied cost) when it is up to the reader to

determine what the force of the euphemism is and whether or not it applies to him/her:

“The man looked down in silence *at the tense phallos*, that did not change, - ‘Ay!’ he said at last, in a little voice, ‘Ay ma *lad*! Tha’re theer right enough. Yi, tha man mun rear thy head! Theer on thy own, eh? An’ta’es no count o’nob’dy! Tha ma’es nowt o’me, *John Thomas*. Art boss? Of me? Eh well, tha’re more cocky than me, an’ta says less, *John Thomas*! Dost want her? Dost want my *Lady Jane*?”

(Lady Chatterly’s Lover: 219, italics mine).

Abboud translates this passage as follows:

” بصمت نظر الرجل إلى الأسفل، إلى هنه، الذي لم يتغير - ”إي“ قال أخيراً بصوت خفيض
”إي جميلتي... أنت تقولين الصواب تماماً. و مع ذلك يجب أن تبعدى رأسك. ليس لديك إلا ملكك
هذا. أليس كذلك؟ فلا تحسبي حساب أحد. أما أنت فقد تفوقت علي يا هنى يا جون توماس. ألسنت
معلماً فناناً؟ ألسنت معلمي؟ إيه لا بأس. أنت لا تقول إلا القليل. آه يا جون توماس. ألا تريدها. أ لا
الأتريد سيدتي جين؟“ . (عشيق السيدة شاترلي، ص: ٣١٣-٣١٢).

For comparison, I will translate this passage back into English:

“The man looked down in silence, *to his [...]*, that did not change-Eh!’ he finally said quietly, ‘ Ay my lass! You’re right enough. Nevertheless you should keep your head off. You have only this, don’t you? Count on nobody. And, *you [...]*, *John Thomas*, excelled me, Art boss? My Art boss? Eh, well, you’re more cocky than me, and you say less. Eh, *John Thomas*, don’t you want her? Don’t you want my *Lady Jane*?”

(Back translation from Arabic, italics mine).

The Oxford English dictionary defines ‘euphemism’ as “that figure of speech which consists in the substitution of a word or expression of comparatively favourable implication or less unpleasant associations, instead of the harsher or more offensive one that would more designate what is intended.” Aboud translates “John Thomas” and “Lady Jane” into

"جون توماس" and "السيدة جين" without clarifying what these expressions mean in English language and culture. Thus, promoting politeness in the TT, according to Abboud's cultural values, requires modifications at the level of language, e.g. using euphemisms literally.

Whereas the ST reader is supposedly able to employ memory and background knowledge, the TT reader is left with immense 'work' to reconstruct the intended meaning. "Minimize" and "maximize" are key concepts in Leech's Tact and Generosity maxims (1983: 132). The Tact maxim postulates that euphemisms can minimize cost to self (the translator) and maximize benefit to other (the reader). "John Thomas" is intelligible to ST readers, but not necessarily to TT readers. If Abboud explains what "John Thomas" and "Lady Jane" mean in the SL, this will be perceived to the target reader cost. 'Minimize' is moving from cost to the benefit on the cost-benefit scale. Minimizing the cost means that if Abboud can afford to write "John Thomas" instead of "John Thomas means a man's penis in English," he should do so, because the scale change seems to be to the benefit of the reader.

The way Abboud translates "John Thomas" and "Lady Jane" suggests indirectness and – therefore, is indicative of politeness. Borrowing euphemisms is a strategy that suggests indirectness, and allows for the

declaiming of the translator's communicative intents. As indirect acts, the intent behind the euphemisms can remain 'negotiable' between the translator and the reader. The translator behaves indirectly to obtain social and communicative advantage when translating sexual material. By moving up on the scale of indirectness, the translator leaves more options for the mutual denial of the FTA. Indirect acts are considered as less imposing and less face-threatening, and can mitigate cost to the reader. Being indirect means that the translator takes into account the readers' need to infer the writer's intentions. In the TT, Abboud's role is to recognize the writer's intentions to produce positive responses in his readership.

Abboud borrowed the euphemisms from English, as they do not have equivalents in the TL. The translator has two choices, either to reproduce the form in the TL, or to produce a formally similar but semantically different TL word. Abboud chooses to borrow, rather than to give a semantic form that is more face threatening. By so doing, the social role relationship between the author and the reader is changed, as is the politeness portrayed in the ST; all Leech's maxims seem to operate differently in the role-relationship in the TT. As the ST is geared less towards making the source language feel good, the TT is geared more towards making the reader appear

good. The literal translation of the euphemisms gives the target reader more options.

Abboud also violates Grice's maxim of Quality, 'Make your contribution as informative as is required,' and his maxim of Manner, 'Avoid obscurity of expression.' He translates "at the tense phallos" into "هنة" which is unintelligible to the TT readership. Although politeness governs the linguistic choice, the obscurity of expression is costly, as the word takes longer for the translator to produce and for the reader to process. It is risky for the reader, who may not understand what the translator means. It is also risky for the translator, who does not know the right word. Unintelligibility is often caused by linguistic inadequacy.

Abboud chooses to opt out, since there is a conflict of maxims: he cannot be as informative as is required if obscurity of expression is needed for politeness. Grice's CP analysis can be applied to the study since approaching a text constitutes cooperation with the text and with the norms and expectations of its culture. A reader of the Arabic text, not knowing of what is missing, will read and accept the text as a translation. The maxims 'Avoid obscurity of expression' and 'Avoid ambiguity' are culturally limiting. There are contexts in which obscurity of expression is appropriate,

where the culture dictates implicitness for face reasons. 'Avoid obscurity of expression' is applicable unless obscurity promotes politeness or maintains dignity-driven cultural values such as harmony and respect.

This idea can be applied to Leech's Agreement maxim also: 'Minimize the expression of disagreement between self and other, maximize the expression of agreement between self and other.' Abboud's understanding might be 'Make your contribution as informative as is required for the purpose of the discourse, within the bounds of the discourse parameters of the given culture.' He wants to make his contribution one for which he can take responsibility, within his own cultural norms.

Impoliteness is inherently confrontational and disruptive to social equilibrium. Lawrence's impoliteness is, as a rule, intentional. One can argue that in terms of Leech's Interest Principle, Lawrence deliberately commits the FTA to stir interest in his writings. However, Abboud's frequent corrective interventions remove much of that interesting quality. Changing Mellors' conversation with his "lad" into the one with "his lass" removes the interesting dialogue he has with his "John Thomas."

As I mentioned, the author and the translator can obtain some social and communicative advantages by being indirect. In the next passage, Lawrence is describing a sodomy incident between Mellors and Lady

Chatterly indirectly. Lawrence's indirectness can be thought of as intentional and has different motives. Lawrence may have wanted the ST reader to do some 'work' to infer his intentions. He also might have wanted to play with language. Alternatively, he may have wanted to avoid mentioning sodomy directly to save the ST reader's face as the following shows:

"Burning out the *shame*, the deepest oldest *shames*, in most secret places. It cost her [Lady Chatterly] an effort to let him [Mellors] have his way and his will of her. She had to be passive, consenting thing, like a slave, a physical slave. Yet the passion licked around her, consuming, and then the sensual flame of it pressed through her bowels and breast. She really thought she was dying, yet a poignant, marvellous death...She would have thought a woman would have died of *shame*. Instead of which, the *shame* died."

(Lady Chatterly's Lover: 258-259, italics and brackets mine).

Abboud translates the passage as follows:

"و طرحت الخجل، الخجل القديم الأعرق، في معظم الأماكن السرية. و بذلت مجهوداً حتى تتركه حسب طريقته و ممارسة إرادته عليها. كان يجب أن تكون شيئاً سلبياً منصاعاً مثل عبد، مثل عبد جسدي. و مع ذلك راحت العاطفة تطوف حولها و تمتصها و حين مرت لهبة حسية في أحشائها و صدرها، شعرت حقاً أنها تموت: و لكنه موت مؤثر رائع. . . و لو فكرت كإمرأة لماتت من الخجل، و بدلاً من ذلك مات الخجل". (عشيق السيدة شاترلي، ص: ٣٦٦-٣٦٧).

Abboud translates the passage literally. He neither changes the register of language nor uses the more polite standard forms. Abboud translates Lawrence's "indirectness" literally. He translates "shame" as "coyness." The ST reader has more cues to what "shame" particularly means in this passage. As Lawrence's intended meaning, i.e. the two characters are engaged in anal sex is implied in language, the ST reader will spend less

time in decoding the meaning of “shame”. Translating “shame” as “الخجل”, or “coyness” does not help the TT reader understand what Lawrence means. The TT reader may think that this passage is one of Lawrence’s many descriptions of sexual encounters between Mellors and Lady Chatterly. Understanding the sodomy incident is important for the readers to understand Lawrence’s philosophy on sexual ethics, and to recognize the importance of sexual love in the lives of these two characters. The reason why saying the same thing in two languages does not carry the same implicature is to do with the lack of shared background knowledge about words and their meanings. The literal meaning of “shame” has been translated, but the implicature has not. Arab readers may not be able to generate the same implicature as English readers do. However, they may generate it eventually taking into consideration the entire context of the text.

Abboud violates Grice’s CP and its Manner maxim, and Leech’s PP as his translation of the above passage seems vague to the TT reader. He could have added footnotes or some supplementary material to indicate that Mellors has tendencies for homosexual love, as pointed out by his former wife. This could have helped in guiding the TT reader through what is happening, and decreased the amount of work needed to infer Lawrence’s intended meaning.

Grice's (1975) and Leech's (1983) maxims can be applied when the meaning is clear to the ST reader, but the translator cannot take it for granted that the TT reader will have the necessary background knowledge to interpret the references successfully. Non-equivalence means that the TL has no direct equivalents for SL expressions such as culture-specific concepts that are unknown in the TL. Abboud has to ensure the target reader's ability to identify references to characters and entities essential for drawing inferences and maintaining the coherence of the TT. Pragmatic inferences are aspects of meaning which are beyond the literal meaning of words, and are essential to maintaining the coherence of the TT. Coherence is achieved when given the right context and the right knowledge setting and participants, TT readers can reach the same interpretation. "Whether a text coheres or not depends on the ability of the reader to make sense of it to what he already knows or to a familiar world, whether this world is real or fictional" (Mona Baker, 1992: 219). Baker indicates that using unknown references can disrupt the TT reader's 'sense of continuity of the text' and obscure the relevance of any statement associated with it. What inferences the TT readers draw depends on a variety of factors such as their knowledge of the world, their knowledge of the characters in the TT, and their knowledge or fluency in the TL.

Abboud's translation of the following *Lady Chatterly's Lover* extracts does not elaborate on the reference of the loan words. Identifying the references is not just identifying who or what the reference is, but knowing enough about the reference to interpret the associations it is meant to trigger in the TT readers' minds. The problem of coherence shows itself in the TT readers' inability to interpret the significance of references of loan words in order to draw intended implicatures, as the following shows:

1. "Her mother had been one of the cultivated *Fabians* in the palmy-rather pre-Raphaelite days." (*Lady chatterly's Lover*, 1961: 6, italics mine).
كانت أمها عضواً في جمعية الفابيين المتقنين في أزهى أيام ما قبل الرفائيلية."
" (حنا عبود، ص: ٧٢)
2. " "There speaks the lascivious *Celt*," said Clifford." (34, italics mine).
" قال كليفورد: هناك سلتي داعر يتحدث. " (ص: ٦٤).
3. "Even a *Maupassant* found it a humiliating anti-climax." (179, italics mine).
" فحتى غي دي موباسان رآه ذروة عكسية وضيفة. " (ص: ٢٥٨).
4. "The miners' wives were nearly all *Methodists*." (15, italics mine).
" وكانت زوجات عمال المناجم كلهن تقريباً من الطرائقيات " (ص: ٨٣).
5. "Then they'll all be insane, and they'll make their grand *auto da fe*." (227, italics mine).
"سيكونون جميعاً مجانين، و يقومون جميعاً بالأتودافي." (ص: ٣٢٢).

If the TT Arab reader does not understand the meaning of "Fabians," "Celt," "Maupassant," "Methodist," and "auto da fe," literal translation of these words as "فابيين", "سلتي", "غي دي موباسان", "طرائقي" and "أتودافي" in the

TT will prove hard to understand. These loan words are identifiable with the ST readers. Translation problems can arise when the TT reader does not recognize words, and a literal transfer will distort their original references. A literal translation could confuse the TT reader and encourage her/him to read more or less into the loan word than is intended.

The TT reader's challenge is to construct meaning not only from ambiguities of reference, but also from contexts that are themselves constructs of the ST readers' knowledge and beliefs. This creates problems of referential indeterminacy in the TT text, which is not within the frame of reference of the characters, but within that of the readers. This raises processing problems for the TT reader who is forced to hold the problematic referent in mind and has to make a temporary reading.

Grice (1975) uses the term 'implicature' to refer to what the speaker understands beyond what is actually said: knowing a speaker's implied meaning. This happens when both the writer and the addressee are operating on the Cooperative Principle. In the above examples, it seems that the Cooperative Principle and its maxims have different values in different cultures, particularly the principle of Quantity: "Do not make your contribution less informative than is required." Hatim and Mason point out that "‘what is required’ in any given communicative purpose within a TL

cultural environment is a matter for the translator's judgement" (1990: 94). When the ST author deliberately flouts a maxim, it produces what Grice calls a "conventional implicature." It complicates the work of the translator, who may knowingly or unknowingly eliminate certain possible interpretations of the ST from the TT. The less the translator assumes that the TT reader has access to, the more he will explain to ensure implicatures are worked out. Abboud's use of loan words is motivated by the lack of cultural substitutes for the ST terms, and risks reduced clarity. He transfers culturally opaque items with no explanatory glosses which might help fill the gaps in the TT readers' knowledge and explain the references.

The choice of a suitable equivalent depends not only on the linguistic system being handled by the translator, but also by the way both the writer of the ST and the producer of the TT choose to manipulate the linguistic system in question. In the following examples, borrowing, or the use of loan words, refers more to a deliberate choice than to an unconscious influence of interference:

1. "Clifford, of course, had still many childish *taboos and fetishes*" (65, italics mine).
 "طبعاً ما زال لدى كليفورد الكثير من التابوات الطفولية و الفيتشات". (ص: ١٠٦).
2. "They were at once *cosmopolitan* and provincial" (6, italics mine).
 "كانتا كوسموبوليتين و اقليميتين في آن واحد". (ص: ٢٧).

By using loan words, Abboud sacrifices clarity, although there are possible Arabic equivalents like "محرمات", "شهوات" and "عالميتين" for

“taboos,” “fetishes,” and “cosmopolitan” respectively. A possible justification is that Abboud observes the politeness framework of the TT by exoticizing it, thus indicating the ‘otherness’ of the ST value system.

The question remains whether Abboud’s literal translation is deliberate, or done because he, like the TT reader, lacks the background knowledge necessary to render culture-bound words. Translated texts can be impolite when the translator distorts the original meanings of the ST words in their socio-cultural context. Abboud’s literal translation (or mistranslation) of the following extracts shows instances of his lack of awareness of the ST culture:

1. “Ha-ha-ha! A gamekeeper, eh, my boy! *Bloody* good poacher” (296, italics mine).
 “ ها..ها..ها يا حارس الطرائد، أيها المفقس الدموي الجيد.” (ص: ٤١٥).
2. “My God, it was *bloody* making” (293, italics mine).
 “ يا إلهي .كان ذلك مثلاً دمويًا.” (ص: ٤١٠).
3. “Kow-tow, kow-tow, *arse-licking* till their tongues are tough, yet they’re always in the right.” (321, italics mine).
 “ يتزلفون و يتزلفون كالحمار اللاحس إلى أن تخشن ألسنتهم و مع ذلك هم دوماً على صواب ”. (ص: ٣٢١).
4. The *house-party*, as a house-party, was distinctly boring.” (382, italics mine).
 “ الفريق المنزلي، كفريق منزلي، كان مزعجاً جداً” (ص: ٣٨٢).

A literal translation of “bloody,” “arse-licking,” and “house-party” into “دموي,” “حمار لاحس,” and “فريق منزلي” leads the TT reader to a different set of values. It also distorts the meanings of the ST words, their social and cultural associations, and the writer’s intentions. In this case, Abboud’s

linguistic choices are constrained by his knowledge of the ST cultural framework. He mistranslates the words, causing the TT readers to reconstruct completely different mental images. These are examples of the dangers of a 'faithful' translation that ignores the pragmatic use of words and their references in the ST culture. This pragmatic failure is related to the translator's lack of competence in the ST language and culture.

3. The conversational-contract view

This approach to politeness is presented by Fraser (1990: 231-232), and Fraser and Nolen (1981). They propose that in any interaction, verbal or non-verbal, there is a set of initial rights and obligations that determine what the participants can expect from each other. The dimensions of these rights and obligations vary, and can be set by the translator, determining what messages can be expected (in terms of force and content). Some can be imposed through convention, others by social institutions. The translator is aware that he is to act within certain social constraints. When he does not, he is likely to be perceived as being impolite. Fraser (1991) maintains that throughout the course of interaction, it is always possible to re-negotiate this conversational contract (CC), to readjust each participant's rights and obligations. Given this notion of the CC, a text is polite to the extent to

which the translator, in the reader's opinion, has not violated the TT society's rights and obligations. The translator is always constrained by awareness of the norms within the interaction and the expectations of the readers. According to this approach, being polite does not involve making the reader 'feel good' (Leech) or not 'feel bad' (Brown and Levinson). It simply involves abiding by the terms and conditions of the CC. According to the CC, politeness is anticipated and the choice of the linguistic form is determined by the translator's appreciation of a responsibility towards the reader. The translator chooses the linguistic means that sustain the reader's cooperation, and meet expectations of what is required and acceptable.

This politeness that focuses on interaction management has also been captured by Sell in an interesting scale of values based on "choice of language" (1992: 221). The choice element in both style and substance is called "selectional politeness," and involves "text users in observing all the taboos and conventions of social and moral decorum operative within their culture" (222). The choice of language is related to the readers' feelings, beliefs and attitudes. Sell's view of politeness (114) involves choosing language that expresses attitudes, which serve the dominant social institution, processes and ideologies. In the translation of *Lady Chatterly's*

Lover, Abboud uses language within these expectations, having no reason to flout them.

This politeness system has been reflected in Hatim's (1998: 22-23) views also. He maintains that the availability, frequency, and realization of the linguistic form of politeness strategies will be unique to the culture of the translator and the TT readers. The translator must appreciate the ST politeness within the norms and conventions operative in the ST language and culture. He then must anticipate how politeness in the text will be received in the target language and culture. By the latter procedure, he assesses how a given rendering can secure optimal reception in the target language.

Politeness entails mitigation. Abboud's strategic choice of standard Arabic in the TT to replace the dialect of the ST can be considered a kind of mitigation. According to the literary standards of Arab culture, Lawrence's text is impolite because it contains long passages in the dialect, and the terms of the CC. Abboud has an obligation towards the Arab readership, to promote the use of standard Arabic in literary texts. Abboud's type of mitigation is altruistic. It involves translating to bring about a psychological effect within the reader. The translator is mitigating whatever the Arab reader might hold against him for the unwelcome effect of the dialect instead

of the standard. A closer look at the translation of the following passages helps show how Abboud modifies the “impoliteness” of the Derbyshire dialect:

1. ‘Tha mun come one night terth’ cottage, *afore tha goos*; sholl ter?’

he asked, lifting his eyebrows as he looked at her, his hands dangling between his knees.

‘Sholl ter?’ she echoed, teasing. He smiled.

‘Ay. Sholl ter?’ he repeated.

‘Ay!’ she said, imitating the dialect sound.

‘Yi! he said.

2. ‘ ‘ *Appen Sunday*,’ she said.

‘ ‘ *Appen a’Sunday!* Ay!’

He laughed at her quickly.

‘Nay, tha conna,’ he protested.

‘*Why canna I?*’ she said.

He laughed. Her attempts at the dialect were so ludicrous, somehow.

‘*coom then, tha mun goo!*’ he said

‘*Mun I?*’ she said.

‘*Maun Ah!*’ he corrected.

‘Why should I say maun when you said mun? she protested.

‘You’re not playing fair.’

(Lady Chatterly’s Lover: 184-185, italics mine).

Abboud translates these two passages as follows:

- 1 . “تستطيعين أن تأتي إلى كوخك في أي ليلة، قب أري، أليس كذلك؟
ردت مغتظة “قب أري” (قبل أن تسافري).
ابتسم.
كرر “أليس كذلك؟”. قالت مقلدة صوت لهجته “إي”.
فقال “يي”. فرددت “يي”. (عشيق السيدة شاترلي، ص: ٢٦٥).
قالت “أح، إي”.
- 2 .

”أح، إي”.

قالت ”إي”.

ضحك من سرعتها. اعترض ”لا. لا تستطيعين يوم الأحد”.

فقالت ”لم لا أ الأح؟”.

ضحك. فمحاولتها تقليد لهجته كان مضحكا.

قال: ”تع. إذ. يج. أهبي”. (تعالى يجب أن تذهبي).

قالت ”يا ج أ؟”.

فصحح لها ”يج أ؟”.

”لماذا أقول يج، ما دمت أنت تقول يج” قالت ذلك معترضة. ”أنت لا تلعب لعبا صحيحا”.

(عشيق السيدة شاترليه، ص: ٢٥٦).

By comparing the ST and TT passages, Abboud seems to have created a “third” language that is neither standard Arabic nor dialect. He translates the Derbyshire dialect to a semi-standard Arabic. Faced by a challenging task due to the apparent lack of lexical equivalents in the target language, Abboud seems to “play” with the vocabulary. Examining his language shows that:

“Afore a goos” is rendered as “قب أري”

“Appen Sunday” is rendered as “لم لا الأح”

“Coom then, tha mun goo” is rendered as “تع. إذ. يج. أهبي”

“Maun Ah” is rendered as “يج أ”

These expressions are not part of the Arabic lexicon, standard or dialect. Abboud creates these expressions by contracting the standard Arabic words.

“قب أري” is composed of قب أن تسافري

“لم لا أ الأح” is composed of لا تستطيعين يوم الأحد

“تعالى . إذن . يجب أن تذهبي” is composed of “تعالى . إذن . يجب أن تذهبي”

“يجب أن” is composed of “يجب أن”

Coining prefixes and suffixes of the standard Arabic words to render the English dialect, the translator seeks to achieve politeness by adopting the “standard language ideology.” Abboud’s text is polite insofar as it observes the CC. According to the CC, which is imposed by convention, the translator has obligations to use standard Arabic in his text. Abboud takes into account everything he knows or predicts about the Arab readers’ expectations.

Abboud and Mellors (Lady Chatterly’s lover) observe the CC for the choice of language mode. Whereas dialect means identity and membership in the working class for Mellors, standard Arabic means identity and membership as an Arab. For Abboud, identification with the class that includes Mellors’ friends and family explains his linguistic behaviour. Mellors’ use of “afore tha goos,” “mun,” or “appen” is usually considered ‘bad English.’ For Mellors, the Derbyshire dialect was an expression of his status, of solidarity with his class. For the ST reader, the text encodes a message in a setting that respects Mellors’ conventions. Abboud endeavours to establish solidarity with the Arabic TT readers, and to translate according to accepted markers of linguistic competence. The choice of language mode in the TT may involve assumptions of shared values with the Arab reader.

Linguistic politeness can be viewed as maintaining the equilibrium of relationships within the social group, which Watts has termed 'politic behaviour.' (1989). Standard Arabic can be considered a linguistic means of enhancing the translator's membership in the Arab community. This aids in understanding membership as defined in various social groups within the culture, and how interpersonal relationships between the translator and the reader are negotiated. Watt (1989: 50) defines politic behaviour as "socio-culturally determined behaviour directed towards the goal of establishing and/or maintaining a state of equilibrium in the personal relationships between the individuals and a social group, whether open or closed, during the ongoing process of interaction."

This politic behaviour should be assessed in accordance with the degree to which the participants share cultural expectations, the CC. Politic behaviour enhances the translator's standing with the readers, giving them a better opinion of him. By translating "Coom then, the mun goo" as "إذ. أهبي" Abboud is concerned with projecting himself through the form of language and the ways in which the rights and obligations are observed.

The CC's dictation of standard language can be thought of, in the Arab world, as a trend, or a model of cultural behaviour, which reflects

dissatisfaction with the vernacular. The Arabic language is characterized by 'diglossia.' According to Ferguson (1971: 16), diglossia is:

A relatively stable language situation in which in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent highly codified (even grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large respected body of written literature, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes, but is not by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation.

Arabic speakers use both varieties, with each having a definite role.

The standard Arabic (H) reflects certain values and relationships within the Arab community, whereas the dialect (L) reflects others. As for literary heritage, (H) is held in high esteem by the Arab community, and is the vehicle of contemporary literary production. Contemporary writers and readers tend to regard (H) as a legitimate expression of words and phrases from any period of literary history. For any Arab intellectual, (H) is a matter of good literary taste.

The ascendancy of the standard form as the literary format was motivated by the rise of nationalism and the effort in history to express the national symbols and glories. (H) is felt to be not only prestigious, but also the only real symbol of Arabic cultural unity. For Arabs, the language of Arabic literature should be respected and admired, and change implies disloyalty to it. Modern Arab nationalists, like Zaki al-Arsuzi, called for the

enforcement of (H) and considered it as an essential component of nation formation. They treated Arabic as “the marker of the Arab national identity and the medium of modernization” (Suleiman, 2003: 156). For Arab nationalists, the revival of Standard Arabic depends on “the rediscovery and re-enactment in modern times of the initial impulses and intuitions embodied in the language lexically, phonologically and grammatically” (Ibid.: 148).

To understand Abboud’s decision making process, it is necessary to understand the political motives that led him to use Standard Arabic. Translation in Syria is, like other literary activities, supported by the state. The TT would be impolite if it did not reflect the cultural and linguistic values of the community. The terms of the CC mean that Abboud is obligated to translate into (H), safeguarding its purity and preventing rapid and disruptive social or political change. The CC can be imposed through state institutions, which can exert pressure on literary figures to use (H) in order to counteract the influence of the colloquial as incorrect and impure.

No new word is acceptable in print to the majority of Arab readers unless it has been Arabicized. New words can be considered to be Arabicized when they have been used in the writings of recognized authors. Colloquial words cannot usually serve as a suitable vehicle of abstract discussion. Dialect forms in standard Arabic are considered bad. (H) is

considered by the Ba'ath party in Syria as the pivotal factor in Arab nationalism. Standardization is a part of language planning to promote national unity and enhance integration with the other Arab countries. Abboud is one of the Arab intellectuals who resist adopting the vernacular in literature. The state rhetoric in Syria specifies the parameters of the permissible, communicating acceptable forms of speech and behaviour to citizens. A significant part of the CC is related to the state ideology. Literary production is censored in accordance with the guidelines specified by the Syrian Ministry of Culture and National Guidance. The Ministry encourages intellectuals to maintain national morals by striking a balance between responsibility and freedom of expression. Intellectuals understand that behind the rhetoric of law lie prohibitions and limits that are not to be transgressed. This leads them to self-censorship, with the awareness that standard Arabic guarantees the optimal reception of their texts. Translation is being mobilized for the sake of re-affirmation, re-appropriation of the linguistic national identity and resistance to linguistic change.

According to the CC, the social-order view of politeness assumes the setting of social standards, and implies that social sanctions will be applied if these standards are not met. Language standardization means the setting of stylistically appropriate – as well as grammatical and lexical – standards.

This involves the exercise of power, often institutionalized through language academies, societies for the propagation of 'correct language,' prescriptive grammars, dictionaries, and educational systems. This study of politeness, as a set of behaviour patterns programmed as social norms by those possessing power, takes us into considerations of the social functions of politeness.

Fraser (1975) and Fraser and Nolen's (1981) concept of politeness as a renegotiation of rights and obligations can be extended to cover the notions of taboo and censorship, the relationship between writers and readers and what they expect from each other. Terms of a conversational contract may be imposed through convention when translators are expected to abide by the terms and conditions imposed by the target culture's social institutions. These terms and conditions play a crucial role in determining what messages may be expected, both in terms of form and content. Censorship is exercised by literary agents, editors, reviewers, teachers of literature, critics and publishers who are influential in deciding what is and is not acceptable in a given genre. They screen out whatever does not fulfil politeness requirements, or change texts to make them acceptable.

Besides academics, bureaus for censorship, critical journals and educational establishments, publishers can be considered patrons, and they usually try to influence and regulate the literary system. The books that are

available on the market often reflect the policies of publishing houses, and the translator has to adapt to these policies. Publishers will occasionally repress literary works that go against the poetics of the TT society. Publishing houses enforce or try to enforce the dominant poetics of society by using them as the yardstick against which literary production is measured. There are many features of the publishing scene in the Arab countries that inhibit creativity and its promotion. The target society is a control factor in the literary system, which is related to other societal systems.

Censorship regulates translation, at least at the level of language. This can be done on the illocutionary level, the level at which language is used by the ST writer to achieve maximum impact. Abboud censored the ST by translating its taboo and still preserving politeness. Robinson-Douglas considers translation of the taboo as reductive in that it “reduces the text to a stabilized semantic object, stripping the text of its sensual or carnal aspects, the sound and feel of it, none of which ever translates.” (1996: 36). In the following passage, the taboo is the body when Lady Chatterly comments on the sexuality of her father’s physique:

“His good-humoured selfishness, his dogged sort of independence, his unrepenting *sensuality*, it seemed to Connie she could see them all in his well-knit thighs. Just a man! And now becoming an old man, which is sad. Because in his

strong, thick male legs there was none of the alert *sensitiveness* and power of *tenderness* which is the very essence of youth. Connie woke up to the existence of legs. She looked at the men in the stalls. Great puddingy thighs in black pudding-cloth, or well-shaped young legs without any meaning whatever, either *sensuality* or *tenderness* or *sensitiveness*, just mere ordinariness that pranced around. Not even any *sensuality* like her father's. They were all daunted, daunted out of existence."

(*Lady Chatterly's Lover*, 1961: 265, italics mine).

Abboud translates the passage as follows:

"أنانيته المرحية و كلبيته في الإستقلال، و حسيته، بدت لكوني كأنها ترى كل ذلك في فخذه. إنه رجل تاماماً. و الآن أصبح عجوزاً حزيناً. إذ في ساقيه الذكوريتين السمكتين لا يوجد أي حساسية طاقة ولا قوة لطافة، التي هي جوهر الصبا. انتبهت كوني لوجود السيقان. نظرت إلى الرجال في مقاعدهم. أفخاذ من حلوى البودنغ العظيمة في ثياب سوداء. سيقان جميلة الشكل من دون أي معنى. لا حسية ولا لطافة ولا حساسية، إنما سيقان عادية تتواثب. لا يوجد فيها أي حسية كما لدى أبيها. إنها وجود محبط، محبط تماماً".

(عشيق السيدة شاترلي، ص: ٣٧٣-٣٧٦).

Abboud offers a more spiritual (sense for sense) translation that might be considered a less taboo text than the ST, because it does not generate the same response it had on the ST readers. Lady Chatterly is admiring her father's manhood, in the sense that "sensuality" means sexuality. Abboud used the word "حسية" to render "sensuality" along with "لطافة" and "حساسية", which do not carry the same implicature. The sexual aspect is not easy to recognize through the use of "حسية," as it can be used to refer to a lot of other acts that can be realized by the senses. A closer TL equivalent to "sensuality" would be "شهوانية" as this term indicates sexuality. Abboud

seems to be driven by a taboo that is “a collectivized anxiety about texts that leads to astonishing variety of avoidance behaviour...” (Robinson-Douglas, 1996: XVI). The taboo in this passage is that a daughter can be aware of her father’s sexuality, which is a strong taboo in the translator’s Arab society. Abboud seems to be driven by a moral conviction in knowing where the boundary lines are. Translated texts that deviate from such moral norms run the risk of being ignored, criticized or rejected by their target readers, so involve financial risk for the publishers.

Translating “sensuality” as “حسية” can be considered lexical normalization, which can be explained in terms of socio-cultural constraints, where translation decisions are biased towards the target reader and culture acceptability. Toury (1980: 82, 1985: 19, 1995: 12-14) argues that translations are facts of the target textual tradition, and the most appropriate way to investigate them is from the point of view of the target culture. Socio-cultural constraints are imposed by politeness norms that represent “the translation of general values or ideas shared by a community – as to what is right and wrong, adequate and inadequate – into the performance instructions, specifying what is prescribed and forbidden as well as what is tolerated and permitted in certain behavioural dimensions.” (Toury, 1995: 54-55). Translation problems result from confrontation of the politeness

models and norms of the ST and TT systems, where acceptability can be set in terms of their subscription to the socio-cultural norms that dominate these systems.

4. Conclusion

These different approaches to politeness in the translation of *Lady Chatterly's Lover* help to assess the appropriateness of the TT. A translation is impolite when it incurs damage to both negative and positive face, when it includes elements that violate any of the CP maxims or when it fails to fulfil the TL readers' socio-cultural expectations. Abboud's changes to the SL can be viewed as a way of conforming to the Arabic cultural norms. Linguistic and literary norms include a range of domestic values and social representations that carry ideological meanings for the Arabs.

Abboud's politeness decisions include implication, where he leaves elements of the message implicit, and expects his TT readers to infer the ST intended meanings. His use of loan words reduces their informative value in the TT, and results in a lack of pragmatic clarity. Also, there is the interpersonal change, where Aboud alters the formality level and the degree of emotiveness and involvement through the use of technical lexis and TT functional equivalents. He goes off record with the intended force of the ST

words and offers a more spiritual translation that tames the taboo. These strategies seem to be motivated by Abboud's desire to conform to the expectations of the TL community, to be accountable, and to observe general communication norms. His adherence to such norms can be understood on the grounds of various political, cultural, or social pressures to observe the TT culture norms of propriety and sexual taboos.

Abboud's linguistic choices to achieve politeness in the translation can be thought of as a 'cultural filter' (House, 1998: 66). An example of this 'cultural filter' is the changes that Abboud makes on the level of register membership of the text (tenor and mode). 'Tenor' refers to the social role relationship between the author and the reader, and between the characters in the text. Abboud transforms the intimate tone between Mellors and Lady Chatterly in the ST into a distantly polite tone in the TT. Abboud has also made changes on the level of 'Mode.' He translates English dialect into standard Arabic. The cultural filter is a way of achieving "functional equivalence" to accommodate the target readers' presuppositions about politeness norms.

Abboud's politeness framework is influenced by censorship. He feels obligated to respect linguistic and literary norms because they are housed in the social institutions, and in cultural and political agendas. Through

personal correspondence, he mentioned to me that he had had regular meetings with the censorship board to discuss the translation of 'sensitive' passages in Lawrence's novel. In this case, the publisher, driven by the governmental regulations, has urged a translator to change the ST and make it "polite" for marketing reasons.

The idea of how society can sanction the vocal expression of a taboo recalls an incident that happened in Syria in 1998. Dr. Malik Salman, an English literature lecturer, was dismissed from Tishreen University following complaints of immoral and indecent behaviour during his *Lady Chatterly's lover* lectures. The students and some faculty members campaigned in the local newspapers to get him removed from his teaching job because of his 'excessive' and 'unnecessary' use of taboo words and sexual references (terms which are unavoidable when explaining D. H. Lawrence's novel). This shows how politeness includes issues like censorship, morality and the role of cultural politics in shaping translational behaviour.

As Abboud will be held accountable for his translation of *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, he takes into consideration broad social questions such as the roles and rights of translators in his society, the value system of the TL society, financial reward and the publisher's profit motive, and the relation

between translators and state politics. These ethical matters impinge on his textual choices, affecting his individual translation decisions. Abboud's translation is target reader and culture oriented. Among the many advocates of this approach is Snell-Hornby, who encourages a model of translation practice deemed significant by the translator after considering factors such as readership and purpose from the perspective of target readers in their cultural settings (1988: 53). Hatim also maintains that "Texts are said to be upholding norms of politeness when they are seen to fulfil expectations regarding contextual requirements in the following domains: register membership, intentionality and both the socio-cultural and socio-textual practices involved." (1998: 96).

Directness/Indirectness: Politeness in the Syrian Context

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1. The Framework

In the preceding chapter, we considered the lack of cross-linguistic equivalence between manifestations of politeness in Arabic and English by evaluating Hanna Abboud's translation of *Lady Chatterly's Lover*. Abboud has made pragmatic adjustments between the Arabic and English linguistic systems to fulfil the politeness norms of the target culture. The resulting TT fails to carry the illocutionary force it had in the source text. This pragmatic failure can be attributed to differences in perceptions of preferences for politeness strategies in Arabic and English cultures (Thomas, 1983: 91-112). Differences in politeness norms form part of a culture's distinctive 'ways of speaking' (Hymes, 1974), and contribute to its cultural ethos (Wierzbicka, 1985: 164-168). Members of each culture, Arabic or English, will have mutually shared expectations regarding the appropriateness of linguistic behaviour in varying contexts, as well as the social meanings carried by (distinctive) modes of politeness.

Jenny Thomas (1981: 90) defines the term 'pragmatic failure' as the interactants' inability to understand "what is meant by what is said."

From the translation studies and politeness perspectives, pragmatic failure arises when the TT reader is unable to comprehend “what is meant by what is translated.” Translators should acquire ‘pragmatic competence’ in order to avoid cross-cultural misunderstandings, and help the TT readers capture all the differences inherent in the diverse pragmatic norms and linguistic politeness variations.

The concept of pragmatic competence, according to Bell (1976: 210-11), refers to levels of knowledge which might include grammatical, psycholinguistic, and what Bell calls ‘social competence’: “. . . communicative competence might be thought of as a kind of ‘mixer’ which performs the function of balancing the linguistic forms chosen by drawing on the competence of the user, against available social functions housed in some kind of social competence.”

It follows that pragmatic competence is the ability to use language effectively in order to achieve a specific purpose and to understand language in context. Thus, pragmatic failure occurs when the TT reader is denied access to the same repertoire of meanings associated with words. S/he will fail to perceive the communicative intent of the ST if s/he fails to perceive the intended illocutionary force of the ST words.

Pragmatically, TT attention to politeness norms in Arabic-English translation seems to fail on two levels: linguistically and socially. Thomas (1981: 101-110) distinguishes between what she calls “pragmalinguistic”

and “socio-pragmatic” failures. A translation polite and pragmatically successful must involve two types of judgement: the pragmatic assessment of the force of a linguistic term, and the socio-pragmatic judgements of the size of imposition, cost/benefit, social distance and relative rights and obligations.

On the one hand, pragmalinguistic failure occurs “when the pragmatic force mapped on to a linguistic token or structure of a linguistic utterance is systematically different from that normally assigned to it by native speakers” (1981: 101). It is the inappropriate transfer from the SL into the TL of expressions or communicative strategies which are systematically/syntactically equivalent, but which, by means of the translator’s politeness agenda, tend to convey a different pragmatic force in the TL. Therefore, the reader might perceive the force of the translator’s expressions as stronger or weaker than the ST author intended.

On the other hand, socio-pragmatic failure stems from cross-culturally different perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behaviour. Thomas argues that it is possible to assume that politeness principles are ‘universal,’ in that they seem to capture the types of consideration likely to govern pragmatic choices in any language. However, the way in which they are applied varies considerably from one culture to another. Misunderstandings arise when the speaker expects the

addressee to infer the force of the utterance, but relies on a system of knowledge that the ST and the TT readers and the hearer do not necessarily share.

While the ability to make judgements according to social scales of value is part of the translator's social competence, the ability to apply these judgements varies situationally. Problems in the translator's target culture politeness norms can cause cross-cultural mismatches in the assessment of what constitutes an imposition, of when an attempt at redressing an FTA should be abandoned, and of how social distance, relative power, and rank of imposition should be evaluated.

I try to account for pragmalinguistic and socio-pragmatic failure in the assessment of the directness/indirectness of English and Arabic politeness. The purpose is to show that the differences in directness/indirectness politeness judgements between the Arab and English cultures are implied in the linguistic behaviours of their members. This will help reveal how, in translation, the cultural ethos plays a significant part in the selection of politeness strategies. I will focus mainly on the socio-pragmatic element to evaluate socially polite linguistic behaviour – how it reflects the system of values and beliefs in each culture, and how it is culture-specific. I will try to show that the source of pragmalinguistic and socio-pragmatic failures, whether in written or conversational discourse is traceable to cross-cultural

differences in what constitutes politeness, verbally or non-verbally, in Arabic and English cultural settings.

Conversational discourse is a rich territory for the exploration of how culturally specific politeness assumptions and strategies for conversation surface in cross-cultural encounters. It involves the use of different speech styles according to whom the speaker is addressing and the circumstances under which the communication is taking place. This chapter focuses on how the directness/indirectness of conversational discourse in Arabic culture reflects a specific set of politeness relationships between participants, marking different dimensions of power, social distance, and rights and obligations. This will require re-examining the notions of directness/indirectness and politeness. I argue that in the Arabic context, contrary to the theories of politeness, the two notions do not represent parallel dimensions; indirectness does not always imply politeness in Arabic culture, and even when it does it has a different force.

Traditionally, conventional indirectness has been rated as the most polite strategy by English speakers. Direct speech acts are thought of as impolite, as they indicate a lack of concern with face. Leech suggests that given the same propositional content, it is possible to "increase the degree of politeness by using a more and more indirect kind of illocution"(1983: 108). I am going to examine the relationship between indirectness and

politeness and tap the speakers' perceptions of politeness in Arabic, evaluating the relationship only as it is expressed by variation in the choice of strategy. Although the highest level of politeness in Arabic and English is achieved by conventional indirectness, the difference lies in the social meaning of directness/indirectness.

Similarly, Brown and Levinson's (1978) politeness model is claimed to be universally valid; cross-cultural variation is allowed in the preferences between politeness strategies. But a correlation is posited between levels of indirectness and politeness. Wierzbicka (1985: 164-165) considers that associating politeness with indirectness is a western concept and an ethnocentric Anglo-Saxon cultural point of view. She opposes Brown and Levinson's politeness universality claims and proposes that politeness be interrelated with the ethos of society. Her idea refers to the patterning of the moral and aesthetic aspects of culture and is often invoked in discussions of cross-cultural interactional strategies. This study seeks to investigate where politeness in Arabic discourse stands between these two attitudes.

Dughri and *musayra* are modes of speech that are expressive of how politeness is mapped in Arab society, and are meaningful only in the Arab cultural world. These politeness systems operate differently and are associated with different social meanings from their counterparts in English. They can create both pragmalinguistic and socio-pragmatic

dilemmas for the interpreter, the translator, and for the student of Arabic. These modes are what make politeness culturally specific. This study seeks to fathom the social meanings underlying these two Arabic modes of politeness.

The *dughri* and *musayra* politeness norms form part of the symbol system of Arab values that provide a cultural warrant for their use. It would be interesting to examine how the *dughri* speech challenges Goffman's (1967) notion that all interaction is grounded in a rule of considerateness. This rule requires all interactants to abide by the unspoken agreement to maintain their own face and help maintain each other's face in communicative exchanges. Since positive and negative politeness strategies are assigned different values in the Arab cultural arena, studying *dughri* and *musayra* shows that the ethnographic study of ways of speaking should go beyond devices and strategies to acknowledge the role of cultural orientations in shaping them. It is only when cultural interpretation becomes an intrinsic part of the study of *dughri* and *musayra* that their cultural significance can be fully appreciated.

This study will assess the cultural significance of *dughri* and *musayra* as modes of politeness by explaining the terms and conditions with which they tend to co-occur. This will include the syntactic frames in which they figure, the meanings and metaphors associated with them,

and the contexts in which they are or are not appropriate. Translators should be aware of how people use language according to the speech situation, how they express and create relationships between the internal and the extra-linguistic factors. These factors help reveal what forms are being used by native speakers, and how these are patterned with respect to rules of speaking. Now that I have given a general introduction to *dughri* and *musayra*, I will illustrate them by giving a number of linguistic realizations of these politeness strategies in the conversational routines of Syrian Arabic society.

2. The Methodology

The examples in this chapter come from audio recordings of conversations and interviews which were obtained from individuals of different social, educational and economic backgrounds, different age and gender groups, and from different walks of life. The conversations represent a variety of contextual features, which help provide the framework to study the realization of the *dughri* and *musayra* politeness strategies in Syrian daily life. The aim was to get the most spontaneous responses of people. The analysis of the recordings is based on the individuals' use of politeness markers in various everyday activities. Social variables such as education, gender, age, occupation, and social class are all used as parameters to assess the Syrian politeness norms in

order to reveal the social and cultural meanings associated with them. I also recorded interviews asking participants to explain what the terms *dugri* and *musayra* meant to them. The assumption behind this inquiry is that people from different cultures differ in defining what constitutes politeness.

Having collected data, I started classifying them according to their politeness patterns. Then, I started comparing my findings with English types of politeness, as analysed by a group of linguists including Blum-Kulka, House, Kasper, Leech, Brown and Levinson, Lakoff, et al, as they have conducted extended research projects on the topic. My goal was to study politeness linguistically in Syrian society, in order to explain the role of culture and society in shaping politeness strategies. In the examples that follow, (A) refers to the Syrian speakers' utterances, and (B) to my own translation of them.

3. The *dughri* politeness system

According to existing politeness models, indirectness is understood to be directly proportional to politeness, and politeness has been regarded as the most basic motivation for indirectness. Leech states that "indirect illocutions tend to be more polite (a) because they increase the degree of optionality, and (b) because the more indirect an illocution is, the more diminished and tentative its force tends to be" (1983: 108). The main

reason for linking politeness and indirectness is that the analysis of speech acts is based mainly on English, where indirect structures constitute the majority of conventionalized means for polite speech. Conventional indirectness indicates the speaker's concern for the addressee's freedom, and the politeness encoded may be motivated by the desire to reduce potential impositions. In contrast, it has been suggested that direct illocutions are either neutral or impolite. Brown and Levinson (1978: 100) contend that direct constructions are examples of bald on-record strategy, and are thought of as less appropriate for making speech acts. This inappropriateness has led to greater restrictions on the use of directives (such as imperatives) as politeness devices. Leech's explanation of this is that "an imperative imposition is tactless in that it risks disobedience, which is a fairly grave type of conflict situation" (1977: 101).

The use of the *dughri* politeness strategy proves that contrary to prevailing theories, indirectness is not necessarily a universally valid index of politeness. The logic of this argument is as follows: by moving up on the scale of indirectness, the speaker leaves more and more options for the mutual denial of a threatening communicative act. Therefore, indirectness is thought of as less imposing and less face-threatening, and more polite than directness. Based on this assumption, direct strategies

indicate a lack of consideration for face concerns. It follows that direct, bald, on-record strategies are impolite.

This directness/indirectness scale of politeness is culture-specific rather than universal. In the Arabic context, *dughri* speech names a linguistic strategy that would fall under the rubric of “bald, on-record” in the terminology proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). What is recognized as directness or indirectness in English and Arabic cultural settings involves a different dynamic with a different cultural matrix. Differences relate to issues like social practices, notions of responsibility or commitment, conceptions of truth, and attitudes towards interpersonal life. This study shows that *dughri*, a direct cultural way of speaking, functions for Arabs in certain speech events essentially as a positive mode of involvement and solidarity. Since Arabs seem to be more tolerant of the open expression of both positive and negative feelings, and have a tendency toward using more imperative constructions, a more frequent use of blunt *dughri* speech in Arabic communicative exchanges is anticipated.

Central to delineating the cultural meanings associated with the *dughri* way of speaking is an understanding of the meanings and values that warrant its employment. *Dughri*, originally a Turkish word, means straightforwardness, truth, openness, frankness, and implies sincerity. A *dughri* person is someone who is clear, straight to the point, and honest.

Dughri speech is direct in Brown and Levinson's "facework" terms: it employs the bald, on-record strategy, and involves an unmitigated FTA. It stands for a consensual and deliberate suspension of face wants for the sake of telling the truth. *Dughri* is directed towards the positive face of the addressee who will not get offended and will appreciate the sincerity. Echoing the cultural meanings associated with the *dughri* speech, a *dughri* person displays respect for the interlocutor as a person who is strong and forthright enough to accept *dughri* speech and function within a *dughri* relationship. *Dughri* indicates that there are little or no hierarchical differences between the participants; it applies to close networks like family, friends, or co-workers, whose members generally share low values of power (-P) and social distance (-D) relationships, as in the following examples:

1. (A father to his son):

A. بدي قلك الدغري: أنا ما عاد فيني أعطيك مصاري . ما راح يمشي الحال هيك . روح لاقني شغل".

B. I'll tell you *dughri*, I can't give you money anymore. It wouldn't work. Go and find a job.

2. (A man to his friend):

A. أنت بذك الدغري ولا لأ؟ هي صغيرة كتير عليك . لازم تشوف واحدة أكبر " .

B. Do you want *dughri* or not? She is too young for you. You should find an older woman.

3. (A husband to his wife):

- A. "إذا بدك الدغري ، أنا ما فيني اسمح بصبحيات رفاقك . فينون يشربوا قهوتهم محل ثاني.
ما عاد فيني اتحمل ثرثرتهم".

B. If you want *dughri*, I can't allow your friends' morning visits anymore. They can have their coffee somewhere else. I can't bear their gossip.

The goal of these exchanges is transmission of information and expression of opinions so the other party will be faced with the truth. Thus, *dughri* does not suggest conflict or loss of face, although the weight of imposition has a high value (+R). If I use Brown and Levinson's (1987: 76) equation to determine the level of politeness in a *dughri* situation, it will be:

$$W\chi = (-P) + (-D) + (-R\chi)$$

Contrary to the assumption that when the weight of imposition (R) increases there is an increased use of negative politeness strategies, in this case low (P) and (D) values are characteristics of *dughri* speech and indicative of positive politeness, or solidarity politeness. When two close friends or family members converse they exemplify a solidarity face system. The characteristics of this system are:

1. Symmetrical (-P): the participants see themselves as being in equal social positions.
2. Close (-D): both participants use politeness strategies of involvement.

Dughri speech implies a sense of duty and an obligation to tell the truth regardless of the feelings of the receivers. Family and kinship relations constitute a major factor in the fabric of Syrian society, and are conducted with a strong sense of responsibility towards the group, and consciousness of the debt one owes to one's family, friends and relatives.

A statement like the following is typical of *Dughri* speech:

4. (A mother to her daughter):

- A. "يدي قلك الدغري : فستانك ضيق كثير و ما في مجال ممكن تطلعي بر ه البيت هيك . أنت فكرت بحكي الجيران؟".

B. I'll tell you *dughri*, your dress is too tight. There's no way you can walk out of the house looking like this. I'm serious. What do you think the neighbours will say?

Strong family ties play an important role in shaping politeness strategies. In Syrian society, there are still strong built-in preconceptions about the different tasks allocated to each member of the group. Since *dughri* speech is reciprocal, it cannot be perceived as an imperative, since both participants tacitly accept this kind of social order.

Dughri speech denotes verbal conduct that adheres to the norm of truthful expression. It minimizes the face-threatening aspects of an act assuring the addressee that the speaker is 'of the same kind,' that the addressee wants the same things:

5. (A clergyman addressing his congregation):

- A. "خليني كون دغري معاكم ، أنو هو ذنبكم أنو الكثير من أولادكم و بناتكم تخلوا عن دينهم

و اتبعوا العادات الغربية باللي غير مناسبة لأمتنا الإسلامية ."

B. Let me be *dughri* with you, you are guilty that lots of your young sons and daughters abandoned their religion and followed Western habits unsuitable for our Islamic nation.

Directness redresses face by following the discourse of solidarity and stressing involvement. By using *dughri* language, the speaker is enhancing the hearer's face by appealing to in-group membership (adopting the 'our' perspective), by stressing affective bonds, and by giving reasons and justifications that assume cooperation and lead the hearer to see the reasonableness of the act. The threat to the hearer's face is legitimized and warranted by the high cultural value placed on the speaker's self-assertion and the uninhibited flow of social information that characterizes close-knit, solidary social units. In this culture, speaking *dughri* – which in 'facework' terms amounts to not allowing the hearer's face-concerns to inhibit one's self-expression – has acquired a symbolic value in the display and reaffirmation of character.

If we use higher (P) and (D) for *dughri* speech, a serious face loss will occur and this will lead to conflict and rudeness:

6. (A student to his teacher):

A.

" للدغري ، أنا ما بطيق صفك ."

B. To tell you *dughri*, I can't stand your class.

7. (An employee to his boss):

A. "إذا بدك الدغري ، ما دخلك ."

B. If you want *dughri*, you should mind your own business.

8. (A citizen to a government clerk):

A. "إذا طلبت مني الدغري ، أنت فاسد لعظمك ."

B. If you ask me for the *dughri*, you're corrupt to the core.

These are, of course, cases of asymmetrical power in Syrian society, when the interactants have different statuses, and have to use different politeness strategies. We would normally expect the "lower-status" participant to use high-numbered strategies, and the "higher status" interactant to use low-numbered ones. Here, the speaker will not get credit for clarity and boldness because he overturns these norms.

In the following examples, directness is preferred because it encodes indices of power and social distance, while the informal character of the events softens its potentially offensive edge. The softening effect is predicated on the function of 'hearer-preparation':

9. (Two shop keepers):

A. "أنت إنسان دغري . أنت مثل أخي . أنت عم تاخذ الزباين مني و هيدا مش عدل ."

B. You're a *dughri* person. You're like my brother. You're taking my customers away from me. This is not fair.

10. (A man to his relative):

A. "بدك الدغري : أنت على طول مرحب فيك ببيتتي ، لكن أنت لازم تعرف أنو الناس بيحكوا

أنا كمان عندي بنات . أنا بخاف على سمعة بناتي . أنت طيوب و بتعرف شو قصدي ."

B. Do you want *dughri*? You're always welcome in my house. But you should realize that people gossip. I have daughters too. I fear for the reputation of my daughters. You are decent and you know what I mean.

Such statements define the context as involving a consensual suspension of normal face concerns. Speakers' judgments regarding the directness of the tone of such utterances are spontaneously, explicitly and systematically articulated and are parts of the language code. This code of language is associated with a code of intimacy, and is valued for its expressive implications.

Arabs' in-group relationships tend to be closer than those of Western societies. The directness/indirectness scale has different values in the two cultures. *Dughri*, in its directness, is a positive politeness strategy, an FTA in British society, but less or even not face threatening in Syrian society in certain cases. Brown and Levinson (1987) draw a distinction between 'optimistic' and 'pessimistic' ways of performing FTAs and point out that this is the most important difference between positive and negative politeness. They elaborate by saying that "such optimistic expressions of FTAs seem to work by minimizing the size of the face threat . . . implying that it is nothing to ask or that the cooperation between S and H means that small things can be taken for granted" (1987: 131). This assumed willingness and cooperation springs

from the social rule that it is the responsibility of every individual to help others and live in a harmonious group:

11. (A man to his brother):

A. "أنا بعرف أنو أنت إنسان دغري و بدك تحترم وصية أبوك . نحن مش لازم نتخايق على الميراث . نحنا لازم نستحي من هيك ."

B. I know that you're a *dughri* person and will respect your father's will. We shouldn't fight over inheritance. This would be shameful for both of us.

By using *dughri*, the speaker in the above example can get credit for honesty, a positive attitude and for making his/her opinion clear, so that the other party will cooperate.

Kinship is an extremely powerful force in Syrian cultural relationships. Social organization dictates the way politeness strategies, whether positive or negative, are conducted. Syrian society is collective: most relationships are established from one's birth into a particular family in a particular segment of society in a particular place. Also, group memberships tend to take on a permanent character, with special forms of discourse that define the boundaries between members.

The British mode is more towards negative politeness, namely conventional indirectness, which emphasizes the individuality of the participants. It represents their right not to be dominated by group or social values, and to be free from the imposition of others. This independence aspect of face shows that a person may act with autonomy,

yet respect the rights of others to their autonomy. As the following discussion of *musayra* shows, indirectness acquires different meanings in the Syrian context.

4. The *Musayra* politeness system

Musayra means ‘going with’ the others, humouring them, or accommodating oneself to their position or situation. It reflects a concern for harmonious social relations and for the social regulation of interaction. Most of the people that I interviewed defined *musayra* along the following lines:

1. to agree with and to pretend to share the other’s views, but not necessarily to approve of them.
2. to agree with the others to avoid the effort of argument.
3. to agree on whatever someone is saying in order to keep good relations by ending a dispute and avoiding conflict or anger.
4. sometimes not to tell the whole truth, or lie, in order to avoid confrontation and trouble with unpleasant people.

As I will adopt Brown and Levinson’s ‘facework’ model, I will argue that *musayra* combines the politeness of deference and of identification: the speaker is oriented to the hearer’s positive and negative face wants to the point of self-negation. This is an act of concession; the governing ethos is avoiding affront to the interlocutor’s face. *Musayra* supports

positive face. If any of the FTAs are thought necessary given the goal of interaction, then they can be performed in a way that lessens the face-threatening qualities.

A major function of *musayra* is to constrain individual behaviour so as to protect the social realm from the potential disruption of individual *dughri* expression. In this, *musayra* greatly differs from *dughri*, since the former combines the politeness of demeanour and of identification. The sincerity that is central to *dughri* speech does not come into play in the context of *musayra*. The person who uses *musayra* maintains a distance between his personal and public selves. A *dughri* person will speak openly, considering it the most effective strategy regardless of the circumstances. In doing *musayra*, communicating indirectly and elaborately when there is a possible face threat, the Arab speaker affirms the others' position rather than their individuality.

Although Syria appears to be a society where intimacy and solidarity are valued more than distance, there are of course cases of asymmetrical power. The ethos of *musayra* is associated with recognition of social differentiation and power relations in a hierarchical society. It expresses an indirectness that is governed by social-structural considerations. The person lower in the hierarchy is usually required to do *musayra* for the one higher. In terms of Brown and Levinson's 'facework', *musayra* requires (+P) and (\pm D), as the following examples show:

12. (A government employee speaking to his senior):

A. " صباح الخير يا أستاذ . إذا بتعمل معي معروف بتوقع لي ها الطلب . الله يخليك أولادك
أنا باحتاج هاالطلب اليوم و ما راح انسى كرمك . على طول كنت كويس معي و مع
عيلتي ."

B. Good morning, sir. You'll do me a favour if you sign this form for me; may God protect your children. I need this form done anytime today and I'll never forget your generosity. You've always been kind to me and my family.

A. " خليني شوف شو الله بيسر ."

B. Let me see what this is about. Allah is our protector.

13. (A teacher talking to one of his former students who, unknown to the teacher, is fond of Internet chatting):

A. " بتعرف يا عادل هالدرشة عا الانترنت هي مضيعة للوقت و أنا بأشفق على ها الشباب
ياللي بيهملوا المطالعة . ما في حدا بيقرا ها الأيام ."

B. You know, Adel, Internet chatting is such a waste of time, and I pity those youths who neglect reading. Nobody reads anymore. What do you think?

A. " الله يحفظك يا أستاذ ."

B. Of course; may you live long, sir.

14. (Father – son situation):

A. " الله يرضى عليك يا ابني . روح عالسوق بكره و جيب لي شوية أغراض . فيك تشوف
رفقتك بعدين "

B. May God be with you, son. You go to the market tomorrow and get me a few things. You can see your friends later.

A. " بتكرم يا بيبي . ياللي بتؤمر بيصير ."

B. Of course, father, whatever you order will happen.

15. (A senior businessman to his subordinate)

A. "بس ما تحسسوا إنك زعلان منه . بتعرف هو كويس للشغل . سايره . بتعرف أمور
الشغل مش منيحة هالأيام . بتأمل تأخذ بنصيحتي و تكارمه بالسعر ."

B. Just don't make him feel that you're angry with him. You know he's good for the business. Go along with him. You know things are not great these days. I wish you would take my advice and give him a good price.

A. "إنشاء الله ما راح نختلف . كرمالك بس . أفضالك على رأسي ."
God willing, I'll agree with him on this. It's only for your sake. You have showered me with your favour.

In the above examples, *musayra* works when the speaker shows that he shares the hearer's wants so any criticism can be mollified. The speaker shows sympathy with the hearer's situation by recognizing a similarity between his needs and those of his own. By using *musayra*, the speaker establishes common ground with the hearer, and in-group language serves as a bonding agent in order to mask an act of disagreement.

The *musayra* politeness system is hierarchical: the participants recognize and respect the social differences that place one in a superordinate position and the other in a subordinate position. The main characteristic of this system is the recognized difference in status, for which I use the designation (+P). It may be of much less significance whether or not there is social distance between the participants, which is why I use (\pm D). In such a face system, the relationships are asymmetrical; the participants do not use the same face politeness strategies in speaking

to each other. The person in the superordinate position uses involvement strategies and is speaking 'down.' The characteristics of this hierarchical face system are:

1. Asymmetrical (+P) when the participants see themselves as being in unequal social positions.
2. Asymmetrical when the higher uses involvement strategies and the lower uses independence strategies.

In Syrian society, this hierarchical face system has some sort of organizational relationship. Differences in (P) are generally based on differences in age, gender, wealth, power, education, physical strength, or membership in reputable families. In this discussion, (P) refers to the vertical disparity between participants in a hierarchical structure. The powerful have more social privileges (and responsibility). In business and governmental structures, the organization chart shows explicitly the (+P) relationships. When two participants fail to agree on a face system, they fail to grasp the negotiation system of hierarchy (P), and find it difficult to set a comfortable level of communication. The calculation of the appropriate face strategy (or system) is tied to the hierarchical system of relationships among the participants. Among participants of equal status, reciprocal acts of politeness (which are considered as articulating *musayra*) mark the absence of claims to status differentiation.

Musayra may be associated with specific circumstances, with contingencies: one might do *musayra* to a sick child; a man might do *musayra* to his angry wife:

16. (A sick child to his mother):

A. "ماما . أنا مريضان ."

B. Mum, I feel sick.

A. شو؟ مريض . تقبر أمك . تقبر قلبها . انشا الله كون أنا و لا أنت . أنت اتحمل و هلق
"

بيروح الوجع . بدي جيبك أحلى الألعاب إذا وعدتني تشفى بسرعة ."

B. What? You're feeling sick, may you bury your mum, may you bury her heart. I wish to God it were I, not you. Be patient. The pain will go away. I'll get you the best toys if you promise me that you'll get well soon.

17. (husband to angry wife):

A. "يا روحي ، يا حياتي ، أنت بتعرفي طبيعة عملي بتتطلب سفر على طول . اطلبي أي شيء
طلبتك أوامر . أنا خدام عيونك . بتعرفي أنا على طول بجيبك ياللي بدك ياه ."

B. My soul, my heart, you know the nature of my work requires constant travel. Ask for anything. Your demands will be orders. I'm the servant of your eyes. You know I always get whatever you want.

A. "طيب . طيب . هالمرة بس ."

B. All right, all right. This time only.

In some contexts, such as commerce, *musayra* has a standardized interpretation that is not speech related: the seller can decide to do *musayra* and lower the price for the customer:

18. (A shopkeeper and his customer):

A. " شو سعرها هيدي ؟ " .

B. How much is this one?

A. " ٥ آلاف ليرة . آخر سعر عندي " .

B. 5 thousands pounds, my final price.

A. " هيدي غالية كثير . راعيني فيها شوية . أنا زبونك و هدية للمعلم . أنا على طول بجي لهون أنت كريم و أنا بستأهل " .

B. It's very expensive. Give me a better deal. I'm a regular customer. It's a present for the boss. I always come here. You're generous and I deserve it.

A. " بتؤمر . خليها علي . لا إلك ببلاش . طيب ٤ آلاف منيح ؟ " .

B. You command. Leave it to me. For you it's free. Is 4 thousand okay?

A. " طيب يا سيدي . اتكلنا على الله " .

B. OK, sir, we put our faith in God.

Or when communicating with a stranger:

19. (A man and his future father-in-law):

A. " يا عمي . ببحصل لي الشرف اطلب ايد بنتك فاتن . أنا بعرف إنك مابتعرفني بس أنا سمعت كثير عن عيلتكم المحترمة و بتمنى كون منها . فيني احي مع أهلي بكره المسا ؟ " .

B. Uncle, I want to have the honour of asking your daughter Fatin's hand in marriage.

I know you don't know me, but I heard a lot about your respectable family and I want to be a part of it. Can I come with my family tomorrow night?

A. " الله يقدم ياللي فيه الخير " .

B. May God make it prosperous for all.

Indirectness is an interactional strategy of *musayra* that is highly responsive to the social context, reflecting the cultural norm of being alert and cautious. A person's ability to verbally promote adherence to *musayra* in potentially disruptive interpersonal contexts (so as to prevent

open, angry disputes) is highly valued. Indirect acts remain negotiable between the speaker and hearer. The non-committal character of indirect acts is viewed as lacking sincerity on the part of the speaker and imposing an inferential burden on the hearer. This runs counter to such cultural values as openness and frankness, which accentuate immediate rapport and common ground between members of Arab culture. Both Arabs and westerners grant these strategies.

Musayra can be considered a kind of pragmatic indirectness that is concerned with a number of issues, extending beyond the notions of clarity, avoidance of coerciveness, and efficiency. Arabs can be ambiguous and indirect, but in doing so they subconsciously follow cultural and subcultural rules and expectations. To question the acts of *musayra* in the Syrian society can be considered inappropriate, as it is essential in some social encounters. Arabs use indirectness as a strategy by which the speaker expresses rapport with the addressee, a rapport which recognizes each other's needs and the desire to satisfy them. It enhances both the speaker's and the addressee's positive face.

5. The Significance of *Dughri* and *Musayra* to Translation Studies

This discussion of the *dughri* and *musayra* modes of politeness reveals the importance of incorporating ethnography into translation studies. The mode of translation is closely related to the politeness

relationships between source and target cultures. When explaining their findings, ethnographers use translation, making words in one language accessible to speakers of another, and reproducing the physical, temporal and social meanings of an utterance. Translation theory has paid insufficient attention to its ethnographic aspect, and the way translations construct and are constructed by images of the source language culture. I use ethnography in the study of politeness and evaluate two problematic lexical items and their applications in the source language and culture. The detailed account of *dughri* and *musayra* attacks the universalist viewpoint that politeness is roughly the same across cultures.

Much of our behaviour is governed by cultural norms, which play a significant role as people form societies; the existence of any society is based on the acceptance of norms, as Chesterman argues (1993: 5). He explains that “norms function by virtue of their social existence plus their internalization by individual members of a given society.” That is, since much of culture (linguistic and non-linguistic) exists in norms, much of what we do makes sense only if we recognize the power of the norms in the source and target cultures. Employing ethnography in translation studies involves the study of politeness norms in the source and target cultures to facilitate the ‘translation of cultures.’

The English language does not contain a fixed expression to refer to *dughri* and *musayra*, so it is up to the translator to find expressions that fill the lexical gap as the following example shows:

A. "إذا بدك للدغري ، ما راح يمشي الحال هيك ."

B*. If you want straight on, this is not going to work.

If the translation student relies on the dictionary meaning of *dughri*, the English translation of this politeness term will suffer from a number of cultural inadequacies. Possible translations of *dughri* may include: "honestly," "frankly," or "to tell you the truth". This may be because there is no target language expression available; there is no linguistic label referring to the concept. Some cultural issues cannot be explicitly taught, so translators must decide how much cultural adaptation is needed. One can start by analyzing an utterance to find its presuppositions, and investigate its linguistic and non-linguistic contexts.

Presuppositions, according to Levinson (1983: 186), are tied to particular aspects of the structure of an utterance. Pragmatic presuppositions depend on two basic concepts, appropriateness and common ground. According to Levinson, "an utterance A *pragmatically presupposes* a proposition B if A is *appropriate* only if B is *mutually known* by participants" (Ibid.: 205). There are cases where the presupposition disappears or becomes retrievable by other means because the target language uses different politeness terms. This kind of

presupposed knowledge of politeness terms is not included in the reference books. If the target readership is assumed not to have access to the presuppositions which will enable them to understand the meaning of *dughri* and *musayra*, the next question becomes: what is the best translation technique to pass on the cultural information with minimum disruption?

The translator needs to know not just what presuppositional information may be lacking in the target culture, but what presuppositions in that culture may influence translation. To omit sources of politeness terms in translation is to misapprehend translation as a purely linguistic act. The discussion of Arab modes of politeness helps explain why certain linguistically correct English translations are still not culturally correct. The texts often contain elements whose significance cannot be made clear to the readers unless they are cued about the role of such elements in the ST culture. A case in point is the texts that use politeness concepts that exist only in the world of the ST.

Nord argues that “translating means comparing cultures” (1997: 34). This brings us back to the question of politeness and what is likely to be familiar or unfamiliar to readers of a TT. Exposure to culture-in-text cases is not enough in itself. There may be cultural problems with the interpretation or even the understanding of the ST; translators sometimes fail to appreciate the cultural contribution of a particular expression to the

text, which in turn may be due to insufficient exposure to tricky aspects of the ST culture.

Cultural problems are not signalled to the translator by any overt cues. While students of translation can be explicitly taught to recognize many purely linguistic differences between languages, it is a bigger task to help them detect and appropriately cater to cultural differences between a ST and its intended TT. What makes cultural differences significant in translation is that it is only through their proper, i.e., established cultural-specific uses that one can make sure of meeting the expectations of the readers.

This study of *dughri* and *musayra* politeness modes is an attempt to justify the role of cultural issues in all translator training programmes to support the view that there is a difference between language skills and translation skills proper, the latter including more than the ability to communicate fluently in a language. Why do some translators fail to take care of the politeness aspect of communication?

6. Conclusion

Brown and Levinson's and Leech's views regarding directness/indirectness are universally valid to a certain extent. Transfer of *dughri* utterances from Arabic into English will usually seem discourteous; and English-speaking addressees may easily become

offended by the degree of Arab indirectness and authoritarianism. Transfer of *musayra* may imply a sense of hypocrisy and insincerity. The understanding of *dughri* and *musayra* speech and the threat they pose to the hearer's face is strongly coloured by their culture specificity.

Both the *dughri* and *musayra* politeness systems can be subsumed under positive politeness. A case could be made for maintaining Brown and Levinson's model and accounting for politeness as an expression of cultural ethos (the different weight cultures place on negative and positive face). When two participants differ in their assessment of face strategies, it will tend to be perceived as differences in the cultural values of power, social distance and weight of imposition, and the resulting solidarity and independence politeness strategies. From an individualistic point of view, face relationships are personal and exclusive. From a collectivistic point of view, one's face is the face of one's group, whether the group is one's family, cultural group, or corporation.

The examples of *dughri* and *musayra* suggest that the ethnographic study of speaking must go beyond devices and strategies to acknowledge the role of cultural orientations in the shaping of politeness strategies. It is only when cultural interpretation becomes an intrinsic part of the study of these strategies that their significance in particular cultural settings can be more fully appreciated (Hymes, 1974).

Letter Discourse: Implications for Arabic-English Translation

Politeness in Letter Discourse: Implications for Arabic-English Translation

1. Politeness: Poetics Constraints

This chapter focuses on the assessment of the TT, including issues such as the translator's conforming to generic and discursal TL conventions when translating politeness strategies from the SL into the TL.

Translation focuses on producing a TT that is functionally communicative. Text linguistics (de Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981) attempts to account for texts in terms of their users. The problem for the translator of personal letters, is the divergence in cultural background between the ST and TT addressees. According to Baker (1992: 217), the coherence of a text depends on "the hearer's or receiver's expectations and experience of the world." The main function of the linguistic elements of a text and its patterning is to organize the content of a message so that it is easily accessible to the reader. Most professional translators appreciate the need to fulfil the reader's expectations about the organization of personal letters in order to maintain their coherence and avoid unwanted implications.

Conformity to cultural assumptions is one of the many prerequisites for being polite in one's culture. These assumptions relate to basic human intentions and motives, social groups and the level of intimacy or distance appropriate for different situations, and the basic dynamics of interpersonal relationships in that culture. For this reason, cultural assumptions are non-negotiable (Arndt and Janney, 1987: 58). When people from different cultures interact, important parts of this non-negotiable basis are hard to retrieve. When this happens, certain behaviours stop making sense, and communication breaks down.

In addition, there are situational assumptions to consider, which have been referred to as "definitions of the situation" (Goffman, 1951: 13), and "background expectancies" (Garfinkel, 1983: 411). Situational assumptions are working hypotheses that people adopt to orient themselves in the interaction. Unlike cultural assumptions, situational assumptions may not be fully shared with other people to communicate, as they are related to power, status, class, and so on. Letter communication will be assessed in the light of cross-cultural social expectations, since conformity to or divergence from the politeness framework might be recognized, but not the social value of politeness forms in the target culture.

There are social factors that govern the way the generic activity of letter discourse is perceived. Genre conventions may not be the same for

ST and TT readers. The assumptions, presuppositions and conventions that surround discourse reflect the ways in which a given culture constructs reality. Within the constraints of the letter-writing genre, there is a cultural norm which expects the cultural reference to be preserved and made clearer. Personal letter-writing in the TL culture should be according to the genre principles in the target culture. Here, the various domains of socio-linguistics, applied linguistics, pragmatics, and discourse linguistics come into play. Translational equivalence is quite a different thing in letter-writing discourse. It is, according to Beaugrande and Dressler (1981: 261), “equivalence in the experience of the participants.” The equivalence of experience is the primary element, which can, unfortunately, be lost in the translation of the personal letter discourse.

Personal letter discourse has some ‘expectancy norms’ regarding its form and content. Expectancy norms are established by readers of a translation of a letter, and their expectations concerning what a translation should be like. These expectations are partly governed by the prevalent translation tradition in the target culture, and partly by the form of parallel texts (of a similar text-type) in the target language (Hermans, 1991), the prevalent scenes and frames in the target culture. Expectancy norms allow the target readers to make evaluative judgements about translations. Readers may have expectations about text-type and

discourse conventions, about style and register, about the appropriate degree of grammaticality, about the distributions of text features of all kinds, and so on. The question remains: how aware are the translators of these expectancy norms? This awareness should form part of the translator's knowledge.

Expectancy norms form a poetics constraint. Lefevere define these constraints, which determine the way translators manipulate texts. According to Lefevere, poetics constraints are "an inventory of literary devices, genres, motifs, prototypical characters and situations, and symbols" (1992: 26). The poetics constraint is also a constituent of the expectancy norms for discourse-pattern text types in non-literary translation. Probably of more importance to the translators are norms that are determined not by grammaticality, but by acceptability and appropriateness: norms of usage.

This study arose from my interest in determining the elements that contribute to effective letter communication. Politeness has been the focus of a number of studies of native and non-native speakers of English. However, no work of which I am aware has been done on politeness in the writing of letters by Arab speakers in English (work that will also have implications for translation studies). Comparative studies, regarding English and Arabic speakers' personal letter writing in a non-native language have not been evaluated in terms of politeness. This

chapter uses data collected from Arab students who are studying translation into and from English, to examine if there is an 'equivalence of experience' in politeness terms as far as letter-writing discourse in both languages is concerned.

2. Contrastive Rhetoric and Politeness Transfer

Translation theorists can benefit from the developments in contrastive rhetoric; they both deal with first and second- language processing, and rely on the same literature on language acquisition. It can be claimed that the concept of transfer applies similarly to both translation and contrastive studies. Toury (1986: 81) notes the similarity between transfer and translation, observing that both involve the processing of two languages at the same time:

Translating is a mode of speech production in one language where another language is necessarily involved. The very presence of two distinct languages in any act of translating leaves no room for doubt that, at least in principle, transfer may accompany translating too, as is the case with any other speech production of bilingual speakers.

There are also the cultural conventions that surround the act of translation of personal letters. The letter type, the reader, and the culturally defined conventions are all issues affecting the distribution of politeness patterns.

Rhetoric, according to Kaplan (1966), can be used to describe differences in the choice of linguistic and structural aspects of discourse,

aspects chosen to produce an effect on the reader in different languages. Until the emergence of the contrastive study of culturally and linguistically diverse rhetorical styles, the errors made by non-native students were viewed as linguistic, caused by limited knowledge of the target language and its linguistic form. Kaplan's study (1966) was the first to analyze native thinking and discourse structures in the writing of students whose second language is English. He argues that his subjects reveal evidence of culturally influenced styles of thought development that emerge in their writing in ways that can be structurally and stylistically described.

This chapter seeks to answer questions as to why Arab students seem to have mastered the grammatical forms, but still produce foreign-sounding speech. The hypothesis is that this 'foreignness' derives from the rhetorical pattern used by Arab students writing in English. Kaplan argues not only that there is a regularity to discourse patterns in English, but also that the pattern is contrastive across cultures. The writings of individuals in a non-native language will reflect the rhetorical patterns esteemed in their native cultures. As Arabic has different rhetorical patterns from English, an Arab translation trainee may adjust concepts developed in the preferred style of English to fit the rhetorical patterns in Arabic, translate the language from Arabic to English, but retain the

rhetorical style of Arabic, or develop some compromise between the rhetorical patterns of Arabic and English.

According to Kaplan, the discourse structures of the SL influence the appropriateness of the forms and structures that convey politeness or the shape used to encode content in the TL. Native and non-native speakers' writings and translations differ in the choice of politeness formulas used to open or close a letter. As subjects of this study perform requests in their letters, their politeness patterns vary as sometimes the request itself, or the reasons for which the request has to be accepted dominates the text. Such variations may be explained, in part, by the fact that the conventions of discourse are related to the perceived hierarchies in the society (Hofstede, 1982). As will be seen later in this study, Arab students retain Arabic rhetorical styles when translating into English. The major difficulty in translating letters is that language can be translated, but not the discourse structure, or politeness markers. Optimal letter translation occurs with transfer of politeness markers, so the organizational structure of letters agrees with the readers' notions of letter-writing structure in the TL.

Members of the same culture share an understanding of the nature and function of politeness norms for personal letter discourse. A cultural community makes roughly the same kind of inferences about the intentions of the speakers and the value attributed to the discourse

behaviours. A native speaker will judge the discourse appropriate if it fits into the body of shared and familiar knowledge. Difficulties in cross-cultural communication can occur at a fundamental level when the semantic and pragmatic underlying 'rules' which apply to letter discourse differ markedly between cultures. Interaction with another culture can be difficult if certain acts are perceived as threatening to that culture's everyday assumptions and worldview. Each culture might view the interactive process in ways founded on totally different perceptions. There is also the way the culture institutionalizes the pattern of discourse behaviour. This pattern includes the manifestation of status differentials, what behaviours to use, and whether a particular act is acceptable. Rhetoric is the way a culture develops the appropriate styles for written communication. Cultural parameters dictate how attitudes and tone should be realized. Cultural switching in politeness norms from the more formal to colloquial has serious consequences, since it can be perceived as an impolite move.

The presence of two languages in any act of translation leaves no room for doubt that transfer may accompany translating. In any transfer situation, a language user activates two languages. According to Toury, "The activation of the utterance as a source influence on the TL text yields a type of transfer which can be termed discourse transfer which seems specific to translation." (1986: 82). Differences in transfer strategy

should be ascribed to norm differences in the acceptability of transfer. The translator can operate with different types of texts of different kinds, for different readers, who may be expected to have different norms. Toury (1986: 91) considers transfer as “a type of strategy.” This strategy can have applications to translation when the acquisition of discourse competence affects politeness relations in the TT. Such influences constitute a kind of transfer that may lead to a TT that differs greatly from the politeness norms of the SL. Letter communication breakdowns related to politeness and coherence in TT’s are especially serious, and discourse transfer should be given specific attention.

Originally intended for teaching of writing in a non-native language, the concept of negative transfer, or politeness transfer, can be applied with some success to translation studies. The negative transfer of politeness textual habits specific to the Arabic language community, to texts written in English, is the result of confusion in application of politeness conventions. On the one hand, the native Arabic informal and casual mode of text development, intended to establish relations of solidarity such as friendliness and intimacy, may be perceived by TT receivers as trespassing and presumption. On the other hand, coherence and economy of expression with maximum clarity are characteristic of the ‘visual’ English text.

Contributions of scholars such as Dudley-Evans and Swales (1980), Holes (1980), Al-Jabouri (1984), and Williams (1984) focus on Arabic-language interference in the English writings of Arab students. There is now reliable evidence that contrastive rhetoric preferences not only shape the written texts in different languages and cultures, but also tend to influence the translation from and into in a non-native language. It follows that the negotiability of texts across language communities is often predetermined by the degree of continuity between the textual habits and conventions of the ST and the expectations of the TL readers.

According to Sa'Addedin, the Arabic mode of writing is 'aural' (1989: 36). It includes over-emphasis, exaggeration, repetition of specific syntactic structures, loose packaging of information, lack of coherence, an abundance of rhetorical emphasizees, development by addition, and lack of self-awareness in the writing process. In politeness terms, Arab writers prefer this mode of text development because it indicates solidarity and shared cultural beliefs. For most Arab writers, the aural mode is indicative of linguistic competence. By contrast, the English 'visual mode' is seen as distant and non-interactive. A balance between content and expression often characterizes the visual mode, as do linearization, elaborate organization of sentences, development by progression, relatively complicated thematic structure, and a subsumed notion of the text ending. The differences in choice, arrangement, and

presentation of ideas (rhetorical style) in letter writing in Arabic and English reflect the values that permeate interpersonal communication in each culture.

The issues of reader awareness and an interactive stance with the reader appear to play prominent roles in discussing observable differences between Arabic and English texts. For Arabic speakers, the aural mode can be utilized to establish a relationship of informality and solidarity with the receivers of the texts. This is typically achieved on the assumption that informality, intimacy, and solidarity are universally accepted markers of truthfulness. As we will see later, Arab students' TL letters will be dominated by over-emphasis on psychological symbols at the expense of clarity, using stereotyped proverbial sayings, commonplace formulas, clichés, overassertion, and exaggeration. The failure to switch between text modes and politeness conventions in translation may result in negative transfer, and, accordingly, to sociolinguistic misunderstanding.

Understanding transfer of politeness as a culturally specific phenomenon is vital to showing how students can be constrained by their mother tongue when translating politeness norms. It is useful to combine the linguistic, psycholinguistic, and sociolinguistic perspectives in letter analysis in order to account for politeness transfer. One problem in politeness transfer is that translation students do not seem to possess a

complete inventory of politeness formulas in the TL. Another problem is that the SL linguistic patterns of expressing politeness might interfere and influence the letter discourse in the TL.

3. Politeness and Coherence

The coherence rule states that the TT “must be interpretable as coherent with the TT receiver’s situation” (Reiss and Vermeer, 1984: 113). In other words, the ST must be translated in such a way that it is coherent for the TT receivers, given their circumstances and knowledge. Schemas provide frames for knowledge of appropriate register in different contexts, and knowledge of genres as ways to organize discourse for specific purposes. Letter discourse has identifiable purposes and a complete structure (introduction, body, and conclusion). Register aspects relate to interpersonal relations between participants, the tenor of discourse, and where politeness is expressed. The writer’s perception of the person expected to read the letter exerts a major influence over its discourse. Politeness constraints affect the writer’s decisions, including that of text structure. Also, the author’s closeness to the reader is likely to determine the extent of interactional and involvement features which appear in the letter.

Genre conventions are indices of particular cultures, which exert a strong influence over the way genres are to be encoded in text. The

interrelation between genre and discourse is also culturally determined; there are constraints as to which discourses go with which genres. So texts can be impolite when they are incoherent, violating the genre and discourse norms of the text. The form and content of the genre must be guided by what is functionally suitable in the TT culture rather than copying the ST profile. Functional suitability has to be determined by the translator, whose role is to ensure satisfactory intercultural transfer.

Texts can cohere with respect to subject matter, genre conventions, or with respect to any possible setting evoked or presupposed by the text. For readers, the text becomes a coherent discourse if they can apply relevant schemas (based on world knowledge, subject matter, familiarity with genre conventions) to draw the inferences necessary for understanding. The scope of politeness conveyed in letters is available only to the reader, who shares the TTs cultural and textual presuppositions. To monitor shifts of politeness in translation, I have argued for the need to examine the effect of politeness features in translation on the TT, as compared with the ST.

It is especially the social factors which determine these contextual variations: the situation, function, and role/position/status of the writer and reader, their social relationships and their cultural norms for a given community. Social factors are culture specific, language bound, and require pragmatic adaptation. It stands to reason that “every linguistic

and/or textual tradition differs from any other in terms of structure, and norms of usage” (Toury, 1980: 94). It follows that the transfer of a certain discourse from one linguistic and textual system into another, as in translation, involves changes in the internal organization of that discourse. This is especially true with regard to the manner through which the illocutionary force of various forms of discourse comes about in different languages, textual traditions and cultural settings. The comparative description of target texts and their sources offers valuable evidence.

While politeness is probably universal, the expression of politeness in different societies varies considerably. The notion of coherence is also variable, as relations between sentences can differ a great deal in the discourse patterns of different languages. If native language patterns influence readers normally, the second language used might seem incoherent and impolite. Cross-linguistic differences in discourse may affect comprehension. A reader may interpret texts in the TL in native language terms, and may mistakenly believe the TL is being rude in situations where it is actually appropriate according to the norms of the speech community. A reader may also have difficulties in seeing the coherence of TL discourse, and fail to grasp the points a speaker or writer is trying to make. Since much of the research on contrastive discourse has

dealt either with politeness or coherence, this chapter focuses on research in these two areas.

The use of fixed patterns and formulaic expressions that have no close equivalents in the TL is an additional challenge. Variation in politeness norms is only one of the ways in which cross-linguistic differences can lead to misunderstandings. Differences lead to expectations about coherence in discourse, and might lead the native speaker to consider the letter of the non-native as incoherent, and thus impolite. Sometimes, the non-native writer simply lacks sufficient knowledge of the TL culture. Translators must conform to the readers' expectations of the letter-writing genre, to avoid unintended implicatures.

Different groups within each culture have different expectations about what kinds of language and register are appropriate. The translator must ensure that the translation matches the register expectations of its receivers. Achieving the correct tenor of discourse can be difficult. It depends on whether the translator uses formality or informality as "right" from the perspective of the TL reader. Some levels of informality can be inappropriate in certain cultures, so the translator must make sure to choose the tenor that suits the expectations of the reader.

I will investigate the use of linguistic constructions of politeness in letters that encourage the reader to comply with a request. The comparison will not focus on grammatical errors, but on the possible

instances of inappropriate politeness formulas. We will see how positive and negative politeness strategies are often given different values when used by non-native speakers, and employed differently to reflect power, distance and the rank of imposition. The final part of the discussion focuses on the implications for translation studies, and confirms conclusions drawn from the discussion.

4. Methodology

1. Subjects

Twenty individuals participated in this study of politeness in letter writing. They are Syrian Arab students, non-native speakers of English, who are working toward a Translation Diploma, part of their postgraduate studies at Tishreen University in Syria. They are at an advanced level of speaking and writing in English, and are considered the most likely people to specialize in translating from/to English. The questionnaire was conducted in March/2002, and contained 40 pages of students' work.

The subjects were given a written questionnaire on politeness, and were asked to write three sample letters in both their native and non-native languages. The first letter was to request a scholarship at a British university; the second was to apply for a loan from a bank; the third was to wish a dear friend a quick recovery. The subjects were not instructed to pay attention to politeness strategies in their letters. However, they were

asked to define politeness in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was intended to assess not only cultural competence but letter discourse competence as well (the use of appropriate conventions).

2. Framework for Data Analysis

The goal was to compare politeness strategies of the letters written in Arabic and English by Syrian Arab students. The study aims to show how linguistic politeness patterns of the SL (Arabic) affect the politeness conventions in the TL (English). It also aims to determine whether linguistic politeness features of letters in the SL can be carried over to the TL through translation. It was hoped that a student's ability to make a request in the TL would in some ways be indicative of his/her general socio-cultural competence in that language. The letter types were intended to represent a continuum from more formal—'chairman'—to more casual—'friend.' Variables considered to be contributing to politeness were status (chairman at a higher status, friend at a lower status) and familiarity (unknown addressee as 'least familiar' to a friend being "most familiar"). I decided that the data collected from students writing in a non-native language in such testing situations (the respondents' best estimate of idealized responses) should be compared with data collected from students in similar simulated settings in their mother tongue.

Initially this called for determining the range of politeness patterns among non-native responses. The data analysis includes both identifying socio-cultural deviations from native patterns, and investigating whether the deviation is the result of negative transfer from politeness patterns in the native language or a developmental lack of proficiency in the TL.

In accordance with Brown and Levinson's model (1987), because the writer is in the position of low power with respect to the addressee, it is assumed that s/he should employ politeness strategies to minimize the face threat to the addressee. With this in mind, I examined the native speakers' letters for specific constructions that could be categorized as politeness strategies based on Brown and Levinson's model. I then analyzed the non-native speakers' data to determine the similarities and differences between letters written in the SL and the TL. Contrastive rhetoric is employed to examine the preferential expectations about politeness patterns used in the students' sample letters, which will be tested against their knowledge of:

1. Rhetorical patterns of politeness and the relative frequency of various patterns.
2. Politeness as related to coherence-creating mechanisms of the TL.
3. The letter-politeness conventions of the TL in frequency, distribution of types, and text appearance.
4. The readers' characteristics and expectations of the TL culture.

5. Data Analysis

This study investigates the politeness judgements made by SL Arab students, non-native speakers of English, addressing TL English readers. These judgements were made on request strategies. This analysis shows that the differences in socio-cultural rules of requesting will lead non-native speakers of English to act in a culturally unacceptable way by choosing inappropriate politeness techniques for letter discourse. It also shows how the lack of pragmatic competence, the misuse of politeness features in a second language, can lead to cross-cultural miscommunication.

Although the non-native English speakers' data showed an awareness of various politeness strategies, the language used to express politeness tended to be less formal and more direct than that expected for the context. The non-native speakers avoided using certain strategies and relied heavily upon others. Although grammatically flawless, requests made by non-native speakers may be perceived negatively by the TL reader because of their inappropriate tone. The students' request techniques and the inappropriate politeness strategies used can threaten the TL addressee's negative face. The students always used positive politeness where negative politeness was more appropriate. Positive politeness strategies are inappropriate when the values of the variables

social distance (D) and rank of imposition (R) are high, as in the case of applying for a scholarship or loan. The SL speaker should use strategies that help to minimize the threatening nature of a request, so that the TL addressee, especially a member of another culture, does not feel that freedom of action is limited.

While the students' letters contain some ungrammatical expressions and culture-bound politeness forms, their writing reveals striking differences in the employment of politeness norms. Despite the formality of the setting (writing a letter both in Arabic and English to an unknown addressee from another cultural group, requesting a scholarship or loan), students wrote casual, overly personal, and sometimes vague letters. Negative politeness strategies were occasionally used. Students did not begin their requests with an expression of gratitude. According to Brown and Levinson (1978: 210), the expression of thanks "is likely to have a special force in cultures preoccupied with debt." Non-native writers tended to avoid using most of the negative politeness strategies suggested by Brown and Levinson to minimize the FTA of requests that can threaten the TL addressee's negative face.

I. Non-native speakers' letter opening methods

In a formal letter, translator trainees used positive politeness strategies to request a scholarship or a loan from a British establishment.

Typically, positive politeness is used with lower values of 'P', 'D', and 'R' when the writer and the addressee belong to the same social group and share common ground. The core and emphasis of the positive politeness strategies is that speakers try to be polite by shortening the social distance to be as close to the addressee as possible. The non-native speakers of English used the following positive politeness techniques in their letters:

Strategy1. Show interest

Greetings are among the principal means of showing interest and acknowledging the TL addressee. Greetings can garner favourable attention from the addressee, and set a friendly tone. Also the use of direct address forms and proper names can motivate the TL addressee to respond, especially when there is no obligation on his/her part to do so. Application letters have to be formal and brief, yet friendly. The salutation has to be selected on the basis of the formality of the situation. The SL students wrote TL letters expressing interest in the university or bank to which they were applying. Their greetings tended to be too personal. This strategy could threaten the English addressee's negative face, and put the applicant at a disadvantage. Here is an example where one of the students inquires after the TL addressee's health status as a greeting:

a. "I wish your health is excellent."

- b. "أتمنى أن تكون بأتم صحة و عافية".

In general, Arabs tend to show solidarity with others more than the English. The SL writer would like to ask after the TL reader's health as a greeting, but the English reader might think the writer was trespassing on personal territory. This greeting technique is inappropriate in formal letters in the target language and culture. Non-native speakers seem to have difficulty using appropriate forms, when politeness formulas such as the following greetings are transferred from the SL into the TL:

- a. "After greetings."

- b. "تحية طيبة و بعد".

- a. "Good day."

- b. "طاب يومكم".

- a. "May peace be upon you."

- b. "السلام عليكم".

Another student started his letter by expressing personal sentiments like:

- a. "Hope you are doing well."

- b. "أتمنى أن تكون بأحسن حال".

The tendency to start with expressions of personal worry reflects an important aspect of Arab culture. Arabs value kindness and compassion and tend to think that the shorter the distance between writer and addressee, and the warmer the mutual feelings, the more likely the

request will be accepted. This is why most students opted for positive politeness, using a friendly manner to show that the speaker and addressee are good cooperators. Common ground, like friendly inquiries about personal matters (attending to the addressee's face wants), may be established to serve as a bonding agent. This strategy can lead to cultural misunderstanding when used in cross-cultural communication, as familiarity between the non-native English speaker and the English addressee cannot be assumed.

Most students' letters reflected their lack of knowledge concerning the conventions and norms of letter discourse in English. They lacked knowledge concerning how to begin a letter. Examples include openings like:

a. "To the persons who are responsible at...university."

b. "إلى المسؤولين في جامعة . . "

a. "To the bank."

b. "إلى البنك "

Some students did not start their letters with any sort of greetings:

a. "I want to study at your university for many reasons."

b. "أريد أن أدرس في جامعتكم لعدة أسباب "

a. "I heard about the scholarship and I wish to apply for it."

b. "سمعت عن المنحة التعليمية وأرغب في التقدم إليها "

Another way of showing interest is to compliment the addressee, as a way to indicate that the speaker has noticed aspects of the addressee's virtues and qualities (Brown and Levinson: 103-104). This student used expressions to indicate the university's great academic status:

- a. "I will be greatly grateful if you give me the chance to pursue my academic studies at your honoured university.

" سأكون عظيم الإمتنان إذا منحتموني الفرصة لإكمال دراستي الأكاديمية في جامعتكم الموقرة

- a. "I would like to do my MA in Drama in your respected university."

- b. "أرغب بإكمال درجة الماجستير في جامعتكم المحترمة "

- a. "With my great respect and appreciation for your university's academic name and status."

- b. "مع عميق احترامي و تقدير لي لاسم و مكانة جامعتكم "

This practice might also be a feature of negative politeness strategy: 'show deference,' when the speaker uses certain expressions to humble himself and raise the status of the addressee:

- a. "We ask your Excellency to approve our application for a scholarship at your university."

- b. "نطلب من سعادتكم الموافقة على طلب المنحة من جامعتكم "

In Arab tradition, when a junior in age, profession, or social position speaks to a superior, s/he would use terms that elevate the status of the addressee. The use of honourific forms, inspired by the rituals of Arab culture, contributes to defining the relationship between the speaker

and the addressee. It is difficult for the English addressee to understand some aspects of this strategy, and makes it hard to be polite in cross-cultural communication. The English addressee might feel that the Arab speaker is hypocritical and insincere. The problem for the student translator is to decide what is purely style, and what relates to important and deeper cultural values. Arabic has a very different style orientation from English. It is "a language that encourages hyperbole and elaborate verbal rhetoric spoken with great flourish" (Hatim and Mason, 1997: 31-34). The same can be said of a 'get well soon' letter a student started by:

a. "I was very shocked to hear that you weren't feeling well."

b. "لقد صعقت لسماعي بخبر مرضك ."

Strategy 2. Be optimistic.

If the SL speaker presupposes that the TL addressee will be cooperative, s/he can be optimistic when requesting (Brown and Levinson: 126-127). Arabic speakers are optimistic because of the influence of the kinship-based culture. The students presuppose the addressee's cooperation in most letters:

a. "I would be able to pursue my goals if I am honoured by your acceptance."

b. "سوف أكون قادراً على متابعة أهدافي إذا ما نلت شرف قبولكم."

a. "We are waiting for your approval to grant us the loan."

b. "نحن بانتظار موافقتكم على منحنا القرض ."

a. "To the bank: could you please lend me the below-mentioned amount of money?"

b. " إلى البنك : هل تستطيعون اقراضني المبلغ المذكور أدناه من فضلكم ."

In formal situations, Brown and Levinson (1987: 106) have proposed negative politeness strategies as a redemptive action for the FTA to the addressee's negative face: "a person wants to have his freedom unhindered and his attention unimpeded." A request intrudes into another person's private territory, and one should make redress for such an FTA. No matter whom one speaks, even when parents speak to a child or a teacher speaks to a student, one should use negative politeness if FTA's are involved. The Arabs, traditionally, are more preoccupied with a sense of hierarchy, and they have a stronger cultural tradition of showing respect according to age, power and social status. The direct tone of non-native speakers' requests reflects emphatic interpersonal politeness and expresses strong feelings about the request.

II. The non-native speakers' request techniques

Non-native speakers can decide either to use the behaviours that are customary within their own culture, or to accommodate their actions to the recipient's cultural expectations. Before making a choice between these options, a student translator needs to estimate the ability and willingness of the TL addressee to make discursive allowances. If s/he

decides not to accommodate the requirements of the TT culture, s/he should clarify that the occasion is being treated as containing two sets of cultural practices, and hope that this will produce toleration for impropriety. The TL addressee may not be able to adjust to another culture's discursive practices, or may be unwilling, and this would put the non-native speaker at a disadvantage. Avoidance of problems in cross-cultural communication can be best achieved by increased awareness of the general language and discourse differences between the SL and TL cultures.

Social factors govern the way the generic activity of letter writing is perceived and these may differ between the SL and TL cultures. The TL is characterized by a discursive preference for formal distancing behaviour and suspicion of strangers, and will react differently to an informal tone. Here are examples of the most common request strategies used by Arab students in the questionnaire:

a. "I am sending this letter to apply. . ."

b. "أبعث هذه الرسالة لأتقدم . . ."

a. "I want to study at your university."

b. "أريد الدراسة في جامعتكم ."

a. "My letter to you is a request for a loan."

b. "رسالتي هي عبارة عن طلب قرض ."

a. "I want you to grant me a loan."

b. "أريد منكم أن تمنحوني قرضاً".

Making a request constitutes a threat to the TL addressee's negative face, as s/he is compelled to decide whether or not to grant it. None of the students acknowledge the imposition the request implies at the beginning of their requests. Starting requests by "I am sending this letter to apply," "I want to," "My letter is a request," or "I want you" indicate that the students do not acknowledge the addressee's higher status or position by showing deference. They do not express any apology or admit that the request will cause the addressee trouble, indicate reluctance to cause this trouble, give reasons or justify the imposition, or ask for forgiveness for imposing. The "I want to," or "I want you to" requests are direct, assertive, inclusive, clear, emphatic, and are strongly negatively value-laden. Alternatively, apologizing for doing the FTA can restore politeness; a non-native speaker can indicate his/her reluctance to impinge on the addressee's negative face, and thus partially redress the imposition.

Presuppositions indicate shared knowledge and "implicit claims to reciprocity of obligations or reflexivity of wants. The speaker assumes that the addressee's wants are his wants and will help him to obtain them" (Brown & Levinson: 126). In the following examples, non-native speakers seemed to assume too much of the TL addressee. By doing so, they increased the power and importance of the request by increasing the

imposition it forms. The students did not express doubt as to the addressee's ability to do the act:

a. "I wish to apply for the scholarship."

b. "أرغب بالتقدم للمنحة التعليمية "

a. "I will be very happy if you accept me"

b. "سوف أكون سعيداً إذا ما قبلتم طلبي "

a. "I am waiting for your confirmation of the scholarship."

b. "أنا بانتظار موافقتكم على طلب المنحة "

By admitting his/her indebtedness to the addressee, the speaker can show deference and mitigate the imposition inherent in the request. Using expressions like "I wish to apply," "I will be very happy," or "I am waiting for your confirmation" indicate that none of the students "went on record as incurring a debt" to the TL addressee.

As for the TL addressee, there is also the need to be granted some degree of latitude within the constraints of social laws and conventions. In the following examples, the non-native speakers of English showed some knowledge of request politeness strategies by using conventional indirectness, although not invested properly. These are established conventions for indirect requests, and the value of these conventions is that there can be no doubt about what is being performed:

a. "I would like to ask for your acceptance."

b. "أود أن أطلب موافقتكم "

a. "I would like to know if I have a chance."

b. "أرغب في معرفة إذا كان لدي فرصة."

a. "I would like to be honoured by your acceptance."

b. "أرجو أن أتشرف بقبولكم."

a. "If you accept my demand, I'll provide you with documents."

b. "إذا ماتم قبول طلبي فسوف أزودكم بالوثائق."

By using requests like "I would like to ask for your acceptance," or "If you accept my demand," the students failed to convey the sense of pessimism needed for conventional indirectness. Once again, non-native speakers assume a great deal of cooperation. As indirect requests can question the addressee's ability to perform the act, this strategy would have helped the speaker redress the addressee's negative face by explicitly expressing doubt about the conditions for the appropriateness of the speaker's request.

The students seem to confine themselves to "statements of personal desire" such as "I would like you," "I want you" and so on. They seem to be having difficulty using syntactic means to convey politeness, and to be using direct forms of requests to compensate for their inability to use indirect forms. They do not succeed in setting the appropriate level of formality to guarantee that the target culture addressee will comply.

Negative politeness strategies satisfy the addressee's freedom of action, while the non-native speaker impinges on the TT addressee's

freedom of choice by being too forceful. The TL addressee's negative face is threatened when the speaker intrudes upon his/her freedom of action, restricting it in some way, and thus treating it with disrespect. Requests of this kind put pressure on the reader to do something s/he may not be willing to do. Examples include:

a. "I feel it's my life's project and I will further explain the necessity for .
.."

b. "أشعر بأنها مشروع حياتي و سوف أوضح ضرورة أن . . . "

a. "I will be waiting eagerly for your reply."

b. " سوف أكون متشوقاً لسماع ردكم " .

a. "It is my life's dream and I appreciate your prompt reply."

b. " إنها حلم حياتي و أقدر ردكم العاجل " .

Alternately, the non-native speaker may be limiting the addressee's options by imposing a point of view. Cooperation is taken for granted by assuming that the addressee will willingly help the speaker. In the following example, the speaker is suggesting that s/he knows enough about the addressee (which is ego-bolstering) to get approval for the request:

a. "I want to be accepted at your university. I am ambitious to get high degrees in my academic studies."

b. " أريد أن يتم قبولي في جامعتكم . أطمح في الحصول على درجات عالية في دراستي

الأكاديمية.

a. "I think I am qualified enough to be accepted at your university. I have an excellent experience and I have passed the TOFEL as a very high score."

b. "أعتقد بأنني مؤهل بشكل كافٍ لأكون في جامعتكم . لدي تجربة ممتازة و حصلت على معدل عالٍ في امتحان التوفل " .

a. "After seeing what is required, I know I deserve such a scholarship."

b. "بعد إطلاعي على المطلوب، أعلم بأنني أستحق هذه المنحة".

Comparing non-native speakers' request strategies to those of English speakers, Leech (1983: 108) suggests that, given the same propositional content, it is possible "to increase the degree of politeness by using a more and more indirect kind of illocution." TT addressees will often use indirect illocutions such as:

1. Can you . . . ?
2. Could you . . . ?
3. I wonder if I could ask you . . . ?
4. Could you possibly . . . ?
5. Would it be possible . . . ?

These requests tend to be more polite because they increase the degree of choice, and because the more indirect a request is, the more diminished and tentative its force tends to be. Conventional indirect requests threaten by systematic reference to some precondition needed for their realization,

and share across languages the property of potential pragmatic ambiguity between requestive meaning and literal meaning. Brown & Levinson (1987: 132) suggest that conventional indirectness encodes the clash between the need to go on record (to convey requestive force) and the need to avoid appearing coercive. The students' letters show a difference in the relative importance granted to "want statements" in English and Arabic. Although direct, 'want statements' are Arab speakers' most polite strategy, while in English they are habitually phrased as "I would like you to."

The interpretation of observed cross-cultural variation in requests raises a second issue: how could direct patterns of request be considered polite in one culture but impolite in another? Given an inherent FTA such as requests, indirectness will indicate the effort invested in minimizing the threat, which equals politeness. Politeness is a redressive action. The norms dictating "reasonable limits" are subject to situational and cultural constraints.

Also, constraints on choosing the level of pragmatic clarity have to be considered. Brown & Levinson allow for other wants to become part of politeness considerations, subject to cross-cultural variation: "cultures may differ in the degree to which wants other than face wants, such as the need for efficiency, or for the expression of power, are allowed to supersede face wants." (1987: 254) Norms in this way enter into cultural

definitions. On the one hand, directness in Arab society is associated with sincerity, solidarity, naturalness, and spontaneity, thus legitimizing a conscious suspension of face concerns. On the other hand, English society members usually associate directness with conditional, polite request forms, with high use of modals and apologies for intrusion. The misattribution of the direct forms is impoliteness, rudeness and aggression in the TL culture. In the Arab culture, directness in language may well be positively valued. So, an English culture member might interpret what is a positive request in Arab culture as a negative personal trait. For English speakers, being interpersonal in formal letters does not mean being effective. Thus, Grice's Maxims of cooperation, especially that of Manner, do not operate in the same way across cultures. The English indirectness is related to the core values of freedom, respect for privacy, principles of negative politeness, and not wishing to impose. Scollon and Scollon (1995: 36-37) call this form of politeness "independence", which emphasizes individuality and the right not to be dominated by the other group or social values. The Arab values, on the other hand, are towards satisfying self-expression, and this aspect of politeness is called 'involvement.' As Hatim and Mason point out, "it should be added that the seriousness of an FTA is a cultural variable; it cannot be assumed that the same act would carry the same weight in different socio-cultural settings." (1997: 81)

Only three of the students used off-record politeness strategies when applying for a scholarship or loan. Their letters seem to be vague, and the addressee has to recognize the writer's intent. Request letters must be written promptly and effectively. To do otherwise is to jeopardize good will, since the addressee cannot afford the time for the slow development of meaning. Hints provide only a piece of information, without stating the request explicitly. Examples include:

a. "What pushes me to work hard on this scholarship is my belief that it is one of the most important goals of my career."

b. " ما يدفعني للعمل بجد للحصول على هذه المنحة هو أن لها من أهم أهداف حياتي المهنية".

a. "I heard about your scholarship and I know it is an interesting experience."

b. " سمعت عن هذه المنحة و أعرف بأنها تجربة مفيدة " .

a. "I graduated from Tishreen University and I have a full command of English and I would like to feel the language."

b. " تخرجت من جامعة تشرين و لدي إلمام باللغة النكليزية و أريد الإحساس بال لغة " .

Brown and Levinson define hints as "not explicitly relevant. S invites H to search for an interpretation of the possible relevance. The basic mechanism here is a violation the maxim of Relevance." (1987: 213). Politeness is defined as the interactional balance achieved between two needs: the need for pragmatic clarity, and the need to avoid coerciveness. Tipping the balance in favour of either pragmatic clarity or non-

coerciveness will decrease politeness. Direct strategies can be perceived as impolite because they indicate a lack of concern with face. Non-conventional indirect strategies (hints) can be perceived as impolite because they indicate a lack of concern for pragmatic clarity. The strategy judged highest on the SL scale of indirectness (hints) is not perceived as the most polite in the TL culture.

Some 'get well soon' letters turned into long discussions of family and work issues, including a sentence or two regarding the addressee's state of health. The letters were used to raise issues other than health and consolation: calls for maintaining patience and strength, for facing reality, and for maintaining faith and strong will.

III. Non-native speakers' letter Complimentary Closings

Only half of the students chose to close their letters, although in Arabic style:

a. "Waiting for your speedy reply."

b. "بانتظار ردكم العاجل "

This kind of complimentary closing is different from "look forward to hearing from you," which includes elements of positive and negative politeness: it has an optimistic tone, yet it expresses deference by inviting the addressee to initiate contact only if s/he wishes. Using "speedy"

imposes on the TL addressee, that s/he should respond quickly, which also threatens his/her negative face.

These so-called letter cliches and ready-made expressions of Arabic letter discourse have been transferred into English in the following examples:

a. "Thanks in advance."

b. "الشكر سلفاً "

a. "With all my deep thanks and respect."

b. "مع شكري و احترامي العميق "

a. "Wish you fast recovery, if God will."

b. "أتمنى لك الشفاء العاجل بإذن الله "

a. "Always sincerely."

b. "المخلصة لك دوماً "

Arabic speakers' complimentary letter closings seem to result from a transfer of Arabic letter cliches, and therefore Arabic politeness strategies, into English.

To the TL addressee, it seems unusual for students to close an informal 'get well soon' letter by:

a. "Yours faithfully/Yours sincerely"

b. "مع كل الإخلاص "

As non-native speakers of English, students are acquainted with closings in English, but they might not know the precise protocol for their

use. The students' letters seem to vary in register. The salutation and the complimentary close are sometimes different on the basis of tone and formality, ranging from a very intimate salutation "Dear Lulu" (Endearment) to a very formal closing "Yours sincerely." Typically, the complimentary close has to be in keeping with the salutation. The language seems to be detached, rather than personal, or too formal for "a get well soon" letter. Examples include:

a. "Looking forward to hear that you are feeling better."

b. "أطلع لسماع نبأ تحسن حالتك "

There is nothing wrong with the language: the letter seems to be too formal to be written to a sick close friend.

a. "Best regards." (a typical Arabic closing).

b. "مع أطيب التحيات "

a. "Your Friend."

b. "صديقك "

In the TL culture, it seems to be more appropriate to give one's first name or a compassionate note to express sympathy with the addressee.

The examination of personal letters written by non-native speakers of English has yielded useful observations. Even in a narrowly directed writing task, non-native speakers show sensitivity to politeness strategies, even though their linguistic output is not within the range of native speakers' variation. Non-native speakers use more potentially risky

positive politeness strategies, and are more informal and direct in using these strategies. This study could result in the development of improved materials for teaching non-native speakers of English how to incorporate politeness strategies into the genre of letter writing.

According to Gudykunst (1994: 30-1), differences in cultural assumptions are significant in any cross-cultural activity. The participants establish a set of agreed-on assumptions, to govern their encounters. Gudykunst states that, in order to avoid the miscommunication that may arise from differences in cultural interpretation, participants should be mindful of what they are doing and the likelihood of miscommunication. Whatever their nature, requests can bring into play contextual factors which may affect their success or failure, such as the differing expectations each cultural group has about what type of request is appropriate (made by whom, to whom, and about what). As Brown and Levinson (1987: 74-84) have indicated, there can be social and cultural differences about who has the power to request, what impositions are acceptable, and within what social relationships requests of various kinds can be made. Cross-cultural communication contains a history of misunderstanding when, due to lack of cultural awareness, inexperienced writers have found it difficult to produce writing for a specific target culture reader.

The importance of studying politeness cross-cultural communication cannot be overstated. Native speakers of English can tolerate grammatical inaccuracy, and can therefore contextualize most errors in terms of language. However, they are unlikely to have the same tolerance for linguistic or behavioural errors, especially when the non-native speaker has a reasonable command of the language. As a result, the TL speaker is likely to attribute the impropriety to some personal factor rather than to linguistic incompetence, or lack of knowledge of TL cultural norms.

6. Implications for Translation Studies

There are reasons for students' negative transfer of their SL politeness norms into the TL. A translation studies student may feel that the teacher values correct grammatical expressions and equivalence more than organization and form. S/he may not be familiar with the conventions of expository letter writing in the TL. Skilled students revise their writing first at the discourse level and then at the sentence level. In contrast, unskilled students do word-for-word translation, and lack discourse competence in the TL. Reiss points out that "the TT should produce the desired response in the TT receiver. The translation should employ the 'adaptive' method creating an equivalent effect among TT readers" (1976/89: 109). She maintains that translators should pay

attention to “intralinguistic criteria,” like semantic, lexical, grammatical and stylistic features. They should also consider the ‘extralinguistic criteria’ like situation, subject field, time, place, receiver, sender, and ‘effective implications like irony, emotion, etc.’ to assess the adequacy of the TT. According to her, it is also necessary to transmit the aesthetic and artistic features of the ST, through the use of the ‘identifying method,’ with the translator adopting the standpoint of the ST author. The translation of letter discourse requires more than just attention to the informative value of the ST.

Zamel (1983) recommends that, rather than adopting a premature focus on correctness and usage, teachers should work interactively with students. This approach necessitates studying the translation student’s prior experience with English composition, since a student’s translating is likely to be influenced by previous experience of the TL. Translation teaching should be oriented less towards grammatical accuracy and more towards acquaintance with the TL textual habits.

As far as convention is concerned, politeness includes the more mechanical or physical discourse-producing activities related to the selection and arrangement of content. These activities are bound by convention (Purves, 1978). In schools, students learn to write according to certain conventions, many of which have little to do with the structure of language and more to do with the literary and cultural heritage of the

society. It appears that the morphology and grammar of a language do not bind many aspects of texts. Texts are more bound by custom and convention. Students learn to write according to certain explicit and implicit conventions that affect patterns of organization, syntax, phrasing, and even selection from the lexicon. As we have formulaic ways to express politeness in letter writing, students of translation should be made familiar with the ritualistic elements involved. The relationships, persons, events and relevant objects were created within a specific culture's values and norms. For those outside the culture, these are not obvious, and studies in cross-cultural communication contain a history of *faux pas* in which letters have failed due to lack of cultural awareness.

Politeness models appear to interfere with cross-cultural communication, where appropriate strategies can be developed. The differences among politeness patterns of letter discourse represent differences in cognitive style, rather than cognitive ability. When students do not write as do members of the TL culture, they lack only the knowledge of the appropriate structure of the TL culture, and the forms can be learnt over time. Teachers of translation need to present models to their students because meaning cannot be created successfully unless there is a strong awareness of the constraints. Only by exposure to the appropriate politeness models, with discussions of the cultural norms and values involved, can cross-cultural communication by letters succeed.

Students of translation may also find it useful to refer to a recognizable set of global politeness patterns in English letter discourse. These are cognitive structures, which help in the production and understanding of letters as polite.

Cross-cultural differences are often manifested linguistically. It is difficult initially for the native Arabic speaker to accept or comprehend the politeness norms of the English letter. The second issue for teaching translation relates to translation course design. If it is prescriptive and theoretical, students will be ill prepared for the translation needs of their future profession. The real problem for translators of letters results from the divergence in cultural background between the TT and the ST addressees. This becomes evident when we analyze the politeness presuppositions in the ST. When students become aware of the differences in politeness presuppositions, they will be able to communicate effectively in the TL.

An effective cross-cultural communicator, a good translator, is often described as a person who is adaptable to new stimuli, social conventions and behavioural demands. This person is skilful at observing and interpreting other cultural settings, able to understand his/her own failures, as well as his/her own cultural roots and their effect on translation tactics (Baxter, 1983: 307).

7. Conclusion

This examination of letters written by native Arab students in English has yielded several observations. Even in a narrowly directed writing task, there can be considerable variation in language use. Letter writing is subject to many of the same rules as is politeness, rules which underlie other types of communication. Non-native speakers can consider this study a starting point for evaluating the use of politeness strategies in written letter communication. This study could lead to developing of improved material for teaching non-native speakers of English how to incorporate politeness strategies into translation.

Most Arab translators are graduates of foreign language departments, and have not received adequate training in translation. Yet they are expected to translate with confidence into either language. The linguistic needs of these students have not been identified and are not being met in university courses. Therefore, awareness and training in the ways languages utilize their coherence systems in communication should be incorporated throughout the translation courses where appropriate. Arab students studying translation should have exposure to the rhetorical strategies of English translation, something that feeds their perceptual experience of the world of the TL. It is important to make students aware of the contrasts between languages with regard to text linguistics strategies. Communication subsumes sharing knowledge drawn from

common experiences, and also bringing new knowledge to the receiver built upon that shared knowledge.

Translators, as extenders of the text's communicative import, must consider the presuppositions affecting the ability of the new audience to understand and appreciate the text. Since the function of the text and the strategies selected to articulate it are not necessarily universal, they are culture and language bound. Translators should consider the text function, the text's linguistic strategies employed by the ST writer, and the expectations of the TT reader. Translation teaching should integrate text syntax, semantics, and pragmatics in a unified whole that trains students of translation in target-world experiential matching. Since communication involves knowledge drawn from the common experiences of the target community, students of translation must be trained in the text strategies that underlie interactive reception in the target community.

It takes great linguistic competence to explain one's own language usage in another language. Wierzbicka suggests that "examining the other culture's 'folk labels'" may reveal the typical communication routines "most characteristic of a given society." (1985: 493). If these are compared with the English 'folk labels' for politeness norms in letters, one can solve part of the problem. This is yet another reason to consider linguistically encoded cultural assumptions of politeness.

Conclusion

This study of politeness in translated texts has evaluated politeness transfer from the ST into the TT, and highlighted the resultant problems. I depended upon the interaction of the linguistic, the cultural and the pragmatic to assess the adequacy of the TT. My work has verified the theoretical model of politeness to assess the adequacy of a set of translated texts. I used the linguistic theory of politeness to evaluate the TT by encompassing the pragmatic, socio-cultural, and discoursal meanings. Using the politeness model for assessment helped me to investigate the translators' competence, awareness of the politeness phenomenon, and decision-making. I used a pragma-linguistic approach to assess politeness equivalence, analyzed translation procedures, and took account of the TT readers' ability to capture notions such as inference, implicature, presuppositions and cooperation.

My aim in this analysis was to infer the translators' manipulation of the ST texts by looking at the politeness decisions made in translation. The concept of politeness derives from the notion that translation is cooperation. Deviations from Grice's maxims in translations were understood as functioning in the interests of cooperation, despite the cultural specificity of the concept. The translator's role is to facilitate the

search for cooperation, not to negotiate on behalf of either culture. I assumed that there was an 'equivalence level' prevailing at the time of the translation. Problem segments of the STs and their translations were examined to reconstruct the translator's internal politeness decisions made in order to draw conclusions regarding their efficiency.

Studying politeness in the translations of the *Nights* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* showed that the TTs were target-culture oriented. Deviations from the politeness system occurred when the TT was intended to address a particular readership. Many of the politeness differences had to do with the individuality of the translator, his interpretive skill, and the force of his judgements. Impoliteness was overcome through 'domesticating' or 'purifying' the ST to conform to target culture moral, religious, and ideological norms or values. Similarly, 'foreignizing' the TT shows alienation from the ST politeness norms, or, in some contexts, the extent of the translator's knowledge.

Politeness changes to the TT limit the translator's responsibility to communicate the thoughts and intentions of the ST author while observing the TT politeness norms. Politeness is also a means of assessing the translator's competence and his ability to make the right linguistic decisions. Following House's (1997) famous distinction, I assert that most of the politeness problems in both translations arise from adopting the 'covert' rather than the 'overt' types of translation. The overt

mode is usually recommended for literary works of established status in the ST language and culture. In the *Nights* and *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, the translators used the covert type by making radical pragmatic choices that affected both the messages and the illocutionary force of the STs.

The translators also changed the politeness relations between the two texts, and altered the meaning of the social role between author and reader by using a 'cultural filter.' Most of the FTAs were bound to source language and culture. While the heavy censorship of the sexual taboo flawed the translation of the *Nights*, the translation of marked language use and culturally specific items affected the politeness of *Lady Chatterly's Lover*. This reveals the impossibility of achieving a perfect politeness match because of the uniqueness of the cultural context and its non-transferability. It seems more appropriate in this case to abstain from finding approximate equivalence for marked linguistic or culturally specific items, and to provide explanatory notes.

The translation of letters written by Arab students of translation studies is source-language oriented. My focus was on linguistic translation processes and mechanisms of politeness transfer. I depended on register and discourse analysis to link changes of tenor and mode to the situation and culture context. By using this approach, I tested the politeness regularities and irregularities of personal letters written in Arabic and translated into English. I found that assigning the right

politeness equivalence relates to the text type in letter discourse, and to audience and cultural norms in literary texts.

The students who took part in the questionnaire failed to apply the cultural filter needed to make politeness changes in order to conform to the discourse norms of the TL. They used overt rather than the covert translation deemed necessary to find politeness equivalence. They overtly transferred politeness norms of the SL that were not acceptable for that discourse in the TL. They were supposed to imitate the function of the SL in the TL discourse frame (a different culture and audience). The politeness norms of letter discourse are not culturally specific; this genre requires covert translation, which presents more difficulties than does the overt type, where the culturally specific items can be left intact or overtly matched in the TT. In order to keep the politeness function equivalent, the translator has to assume different cultural presuppositions in the ST and TT addressees.

Politeness mismatches leading to serious shortcomings in the TT can be seen in a different light as the natural consequence of different politeness norms in Arabic and British cultures. Cultural cross-over in translation is related to politeness norms in a foreign language culture. Given the dynamic nature of communicative and societal norms and the evolving process of research, translators have to be maximally aware of research results in cross-cultural pragmatics to help them apply a cultural

filter to judge the appropriateness of changes. My work on the *dughri* and *musayra* politeness norms shows that translation criticism will always have to move from ideology, function, genre, and register to the communicative values of both the ST and the TT. Assessing the politeness of a translation will rely on, first, analysis, description and explanation based on knowledge of the linguistic conventions, and, second, judgements of values (social and cultural questions of appropriateness) of both the ST and the TT.

Impolite texts in translation studies can cover anything from pragmatic errors to a translator's overall approach (e.g., domestication or foreignization). A translation is impolite when it is full of interference from the original, hiding the 'Otherness' of the original. Cultural filtering by using the overt type of translation and adopting pragmatic strategies like explicitness change, information change, illocutionary change, interpersonal change, coherence change, additions, omissions, or partial translations can make translations impolite.

Studying Arabic-English-Arabic politeness problems is challenging because the languages do not share linguistic or cultural ancestry. In my view, the aim of translation training in this respect should be to broaden the trainees' concepts of translation, to expose them to the wide variety of relations between the ST and its translation. Several teaching strategies are applicable here. One is to present the trainees with a wide variety of

translations and study the kinds of source-target relations which they manifest. These texts should be of all types, as choosing the right politeness strategy relates mainly to the text type. A second strategy is to take a single source text and examine how it has been translated in different ways depending on the readership. Trainees should be aware of the many basic text and discourse norms of the target language, and specifically, of the differences in the cultural perceptions of politeness and how it is distributed in different cultures. They should be made aware of the significance of Grice's Cooperative Principle and communication maxims and how they affect the quality of any cross-cultural communication, including translation. Translation studies students should be aware of which politeness techniques produce which effects on the TT readers, and examine how politeness is dealt with in certain genres, cultures, and historical periods.

This thesis shows that the most fruitful approach to translation theory is to be developed within pragmatics to account for the ways in which we perceive the intended message of the text. Politeness choices by original authors are motivated, so making changes in translations can only be justified in relation to the intended meaning. The translators' pragmatic strategies are bound up with the socio-cultural context in which the translating is taking place. The status of the ST, its intended readership, the translator's linguistic and communicative competence,

and the reception of the TT by the TL readers are all relevant to the study of politeness in translation.

Appendix

A QUESTIONNAIRE

I would very much appreciate your help with my research. Could you please tick the appropriate boxes and answer the questions below.

Questions related to letter writing should be written both in Arabic and in English. It would be really helpful if you write clearly.

Title: ☐ Mr. ☐ Miss. ☐ Mrs.

Family Name:-----, First Name:-----

Age: 16-25 ☐ 25- 35 ☐ 35-45 ☐

Sex: F ☐ ☐ M

Place of Birth: -----
-----.

Place of Residence: -----.

Education: High School ☐ Yes ☐ No

University ☐ Yes ☐ No

Occupation/Profession: -----
-----.

Mother's Education: -----
-----.

Mother's Occupation/Profession: -----
-----.

Father's Education:-----
-----.

Father's Occupation/Profession: -----
-----.

English/Arabic Language Proficiency*

Beginner ☐ Intermediate ☐ Advanced ☐

Other Languages:-----.

☐ ☐

Have you lived and studied Arabic/English* abroad: Yes No

***Arabic for English students/ English for Arabic students.**

- 1. Could you please write in the space provided below what the word “politeness” means to you, and what you consider to be the characteristics of a “polite” person:**

- 2. Please give an example of a behaviour that impresses you as being polite, and another that does not impress you for being impolite.**

- 3. How do you understand the following terms:**

Dughri ():

Musayara ():

Mujamala ():.....

Please write questions (4) and (5) in both Arabic and English. Length is optional. A separate sheet is attached.

- 4. Could you please write a letter to a university applying for a scholarship, setting out the reasons that make you eligible?**
- 5. Could you please write a “Get well soon” letter to a friend who lives away, and has not been feeling very well lately?**

Thank you for your participation.

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